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BETWEEN THE MILLSTONES

Mr. Molotov's reply to Mr. Byrnes did not lack precision. It was an uncompromising statement of the Russian case; it emphasised that Britain and America had stood together against the Soviet Union in the Paris discussions; that if Russia was expanding in Eastern Europe, American expansion in the Pacific was equally unilateral. Mr. Molotov denounces in advance the American effort to defeat Russia about the peace treaties by outvoting her at Uno. So the two greatest World Powers stand glaring at one another, each busily and covertly acquiring defence bases wherever they can and accusing the other of aggressive intentions.

We should not underestimate the powerful effect of domestic factors both in America and Russia as causes of this deadlock. Unrra observers report that drought has endangered this year's Ukrainian harvest; and that the rebuilding of Western Russian industry is proving even more difficult than was anticipated. The Russians are short of everything, including qualified administrators, skilled workers, machine tools, industrial and agricultural equipment and, in certain areas, food. If they do not stress the appalling devastation inflicted on them by the Germans, the reason would seem to be that they do not wish to admit weakness to the outside world or to their own people. A frank statement that they are systematically removing all they can from Eastern Europe and Manchuria for no more complex reason than their own grave shortage of machinery and foodstuffs, would seem to us the best defence they could make. They prefer, however, to accuse the Western Powers of aggressive designs and to justify their economic and political grip on the occupied countries as mutual defence against baleful capitalist schemes.

American foreign policy is also a reflection of an acute internal crisis. Mr. Byrnes knows quite well that the frantic pace of demobilisation, accelerated by quite irresponsible Congress pressure, has so disintegrated the American Armed Forces that the United States is now in no position to undertake any serious military obligation. For the moment, America, as regards her European and Middle Eastern commitments, relies on the military strength of Great Britain just as much as she did in the years between her withdrawal from the League and the attack on Pearl Harbour. In the Pacific, however, under the influence of the Navy leaders, she plays the part of a great Imperialist Power, ringing herself round with island bases, and supporting Chiang Kai-shek against the Communists. But the Navy Department is not the Government of America. No one could define American policy or say what relation it has to American strength. The Navy is merely one of the pressure groups that take the place of Government in Washington.

Meanwhile, at home, a weak United States Administration, detesting Socialism and pledged to a return to free enterprise, has just interfered more violently in industrial affairs than the British Labour Government would ever dream of doing. Luckless Harry Truman, whose only hope of re-election is the Labour vote, has found himself constrained to hurry through Congress a vicious anti-strike Bill, which will cost him dear at the poll. The crisis is due to a collision of labour and the employers which markedly resembles the industrial struggle that shook this country after the last war, and culminated in the General Strike. The Labour leaders, especially John L. Lewis, have conducted sectional battles against the employers, who (most clearly in the case of the railway strike) were themselves ready for any national dislocation to defeat what they regard as the danger of Union dictation. There is no Labour movement in America with a single strategy, but simply a collection of Labour pressure groups each fighting on its own. The employers' defence of their huge war profits has been equally narrow and sectional; and finally, the Administration has been completely hamstrung by its conviction that the American Way of Life defines the function of the State as merely to ensure fair play in the all-in wrestling match of American business.

In the long run, we may hope, the latest crisis will prove beneficial. It may indeed at least teach the American trade unions that they can no longer confine their political activities to lobbying corrupt politicians and selling their support to whichever of the two old parties bids highest for it. If this happens, a Labour Party and a Labour movement will emerge. But in the short run, such considerations can have no effect. President Truman's act is a victory for all that is most reactionary in America. After it America will find it increasingly difficult to work closely with any country which is attempting planned co-operation in its foreign or domestic policy. Increasingly from now on, until the next world slump shatters the dream of normalcy, the trend in America is likely to be against international co-operation; and in that case its foreign policy will aim mainly at ensuring freedom for American business to make money anywhere it likes.

In these circumstances Britain would be very ill-advised to commit herself to any course of action which demands consistent American support for its success. How perilous reliance on the American Administration can be was shown by Mr. Morrison's recent visit to Washington. His statement on Wednesday suggests that Mr. McDermott's repudiation of the terms of the food agreement was due only to misleading reports of the Lord President's original speech in Parliament. But the impression is left that the War Department has insisted on watering down commitments to which Mr. Clayton and others had subscribed. The incident confirms the view that no consistent or continuous policy springs from the U.S. Administration as a whole. This tendency is likely to increase.

To suggest, therefore, that Britain is faced with a choice of an alliance with the Americans or the Russians is grotesque. Neither Russia nor America in their present mood would be over sorry to see the break-up of the British Empire and neither is prepared to co-operate with us in any deep or permanent sense. Equally, we are not, or should not be, prepared to enter into exclusive pacts with either of them. At the moment we possess the advantages and the discomforts of political loneliness.

Western Europe's Dilemma

All Germany is still divided into four parts. Though there is much day-by-day co-operation between the occupying Powers and agreements on important administrative problems, there is no sign of any move towards the unitary Germany postulated in the Potsdam Agreement. Indeed the Russians have even objected to the proposal that the joint committee to investigate disarmament should include economic disarmament in its terms of reference. On the very day of Molotov's speech, General Clay announced his decision to call a halt in dismantling German factories in order to meet Russian claims to reparations. Such events naturally strengthen the arguments of advocates of the Western Bloc like Mr. Boothby, whose reply to Mr. Gerald Barry we publish this week. Mr. Boothby is certainly right in saying that it is ridiculous, on the grounds of the Potsdam Agreement (whose assumptions have broken down), to refuse to utilise the resources of Western Germany for the manufacture of the goods which all Europe wants and which Germany must produce if she is to pay for the food which she so urgently needs. He is probably also right in holding, with us and Mr. Cole, that for the Allies to dither and do nothing in their Zones in Germany is less likely to lead to an agreement with the Soviet Union than for them to evolve an economic plan with which Russia can be invited to associate herself if she will. But two questions remain. How far is it possible to rebuild Western Germany without rearming a renascent Reich, and how can an agreement on Western Economic Union be formed between the British Labour Government and an ideologically divided France—to say nothing of the other countries involved?

Czechoslovakia Votes

The result of the General Election in Czechoslovakia is unlikely to lead to any radical change of policy. All parties were committed before the poll to the continuance of Coalition Government and to implementing the Kosice programme of nationalisation, land reform, and *épuration*. The consequence of the marked success of the Communist Party in Bohemia and Moravia, where they polled about 40 per cent. of the votes, will be that the execution of the Kosice programme will be speeded up. The small proportion—barely 15 per cent.—of the votes secured by the Social-Democrats suggests that, in the Czech lands, working-class electors were determined that there should be no compromise with capitalist interests in the carrying out of the reconstruction of Czechoslovakia on Socialist lines, and that they considered that the Communist Party, several of whose Ministers did particularly well in the last administration, offered the best assurance of Socialist policy being vigorously executed. In Slovakia, where Catholicism is a stronger influence, the Left did less well, and the Conservative "Democrats" secured 60 per cent. of the votes. Thus, in the Assembly, the two Left parties will only have a bare majority of the seats, though this should be enough to ensure that the still uncompleted programme of nationalisation goes forward apace.

The Centre Rules Holland

As soon as the results of the Dutch elections were known, it was clear that the Catholic Party, with 31 per cent. of the votes, had become master of the situation in the sense that no Government could exist without its support, and that it could choose between two possible coalitions—with the Labour Party (28 per cent.) or with the two Conservative parties (anti-Revolutionary and Christian Historical Union)—who had secured 21 per cent. of the votes between them. Like M.R.P. in France, the Catholic Party has a Left wing which would feel uneasy in alliance with the Calvinist (and extremely reactionary) Conservatives, quite apart from the religious issue; and the Queen's invitation to Dr. Beel, a Left-wing Catholic, to form a Cabinet suggests that the new administration will be based on a Catholic-Labour coalition. Dr. Beel, who was Home Minister in the Schermerhorn Government, is credited with liberal views about Indonesia, and the leaders of the highly "moderate" Dutch Labour Party will probably find no difficulty in accepting office under him. The Communist Party, which polled 11 per cent. of the votes, is already prophesying that the Coalition will be dominated by "clerical reaction." Much depends on the way in which the Catholic Right wing uses its influence.

Divided Korea

The position in Korea to-day shows the idiocy of zoning just as clearly as Austria or Germany. In Korea, however, there are only two occupying Powers; the Soviet Union in the coal-producing zone north of the 38th parallel and the U.S.A. in the southern, far more industrially developed area. For some months there was little, if any, liaison between the two military governments and two different policies were adopted. The Russians encouraged political development, land reform and public control of financial and industrial organisations, whilst the Americans, using the excuse that the Koreans were insufficiently trained, kept Japanese officials in key positions. Last December, after the Moscow Conference, a joint Soviet-American commission was set up to prepare, with the aid of the Korean democratic parties, proposals for a Provisional Government, which were to be submitted for the approval of the Chinese, British, Russian and American Governments. This joint commission, which met in Seoul, capital of the American Zone, in March, collapsed a fortnight ago because the two occupying Powers could find no basis of agreement. The Americans proposed the unification of Korea; the Russians argued that this was outside the terms of reference and in any case was a matter for the Koreans to decide. But what groups of Koreans could be regarded by both Powers as competent to take decisions, is not clear. The Americans refused from the beginning to co-operate with the Korean liberation committees which came into the open soon after Hiroshima, used Japanese police to suppress them and allowed Japanese quislings to remain in office. They then stimulated the landowners and big business party (the Korean Democratic Party) and brought back two Korean exiles, Kim Koo and Synhman Rhee, who regarded the liberation committees with about as much approval as Chiang Kai-Shek regards the Yenan regime. In short, Korea to-day is the counterpart of the European situation, with the Russians encouraging a Left-wing resistance movement and the Americans refusing, in the sacred name of private enterprise, to recognise the popular demand for economic and political change.

The Steel Debate

The two-day debate on the iron and steel industry produced little beyond Mr. Wilmot's more specific statement about the processes which are to be nationalised. As was anticipated, the State is to take over the primary plants, including the coke-ovens, the production of pig iron and steel ingots, and the heavy rolling mills. This rule is to be subject to adjustment to take account of the different relations between primary and finishing processes in particular plants. In some cases, it seems, the Government may see fit to vary the boundary between private and public ownership to avoid unnecessary technical complications. Naturally, it will be rather difficult to unravel the complex financial tangle in which the industry has become involved, and very careful examination of the industry, from firm to firm, may be required before the Government's project emerges clearly. This will be part of the task of the new Control Board—which will also supervise prices and production in the interim period—but Mr. Wilmot rightly insisted that the decision of principle had to be taken first before the Government proceeded with the preparation of an elaborate scheme for the partition of the industry. We still do not know the names of Mr. Wilmot's nominees who are to compose the new Board, but it is clear that the big steel-makers are very reluctant to lend their names or their experience to the project. The calibre of their opposition was shown by Sir Andrew Duncan's able speech. Obviously, if the employers deliberately obstruct the plan—and the principle of "selective" nationalisation which the Cabinet intends to adopt will give them many opportunities for creating friction—the Government's answer may have to be nationalisation throughout the industry.

The Future of Pottery

The basic problems of the pottery industry are the outcome of its obsolete technical and economic structure. Apart from a few firms with modern plant, which have a considerable share of the home and export markets, most producers have been struggling along on small profit margins, unable to improve either layout or equipment. Until recently, there has been a surplus of labour in North Staffordshire, which has helped to keep down wages and has discouraged mechanisation and the introduction of proper training and apprenticeship schemes. On these questions the Working Party has endorsed the criticisms that have been current on both sides of the industry for some time; but its recommendations do not provide any easy answer to them. It is clear that some of the marginal firms, in which both efficiency and working conditions have been notoriously poor, cannot hope to survive. But to eliminate them, other means may be required than the Working Party's idea of imposing statutory minimum wages and conditions. It is certainly essential to formulate a coherent wage-structure in an industry with a long tradition of piece-rates for crafts which are differently classified from factory to factory. The Working Party also suggests that the smaller producers might help themselves by co-operative distribution; that research, statistical and costing methods should be reorganised; and that depreciation tax allowances should be increased to enable potters more speedily to write off inefficient plant. Thorough rehabilitation of the industry would permit it to aim even higher than the sales target of £18 million in the next few years. But the industry at present is in a muddle, and it is difficult to generalise about its problems. Some producers are worried about their long-term prospects; others have more pressing financial or technical problems. The Working Party took this point well in proposing the establishment of a permanent Advisory Board which could attend to the detailed application of the general principles set out in the Report.

Foreigners in the Mines

We are glad to hear that the Ministry of Fuel and Power is at last considering the proposal to use Polish volunteers for work in the coal mines. Both in France and Germany Polish immigrants have for generations reinforced the indigenous coalminer; and at first sight it seems strange that the Minister's recruitment efforts so far have been limited exclusively to British nationals. Even now only ex-miners in the Polish Forces are being considered as recruits. The fact is that the Miners' Unions have in the past quite reasonably opposed the importation of any "cheap foreign labour" which might undercut miners' wages and steal their jobs in a slump. Now, of course, there is no chance, in any future which one can foresee, of chronic or large-scale unemployment among British miners. But the suspicions of the Union leaders remain. They regard the foreign coal-miner, despite his high degree of skill, as a new type of "Bevin Boy." Such suspicions cannot be permitted to prevent the Government from tapping at once the only source of skilled man-power likely to give results which could help to avert the coal crisis next winter. We believe that the scheme should be extended not merely to the few thousand ex-miners in the Polish Forces, but also to ex-miners and likely young men in the D.P. camps in Germany and Austria. There is a great deal of talk about helping the displaced persons. Why should we not do something which both helps them and helps ourselves?

Two Years' Compulsory Service ?

If the Government has really decided, as several newspapers say it has, in favour of two years' compulsory military service, there is surely trouble to come. Industry cannot afford to lose the services of two years' supply of men just reaching manhood. Two years' interruption to higher education is much more than twice as serious as one year's interruption; and, for those who are exempted in order to finish their education, two years' service in the middle twenties before starting on a career is very serious indeed. No doubt it will be argued that the Army must have the men, and that one year is needed for training, so that two years of service will in fact yield only one year's supply of trained men. This argument assumes that the scheme we are to have should be essentially one of compulsory *service* as well as of compulsory *training*. But there are surely many who are prepared to support compulsory training but are against using the young trainees as armies of occupation either in Germany or in the Far or Middle East. The decision, if it is correctly reported, raises the whole question between those who propose to begin by adding up military commitments, and then devising ways of meeting them, and those who argue that we should begin by settling how many men we can spare for the armed forces, and then cut our commitments to match. For our part, we regard the suggestion of two years' compulsory service in the armed forces with the gravest apprehension, and consider that it ought to be opposed.

Mr. Truman—Strike-Breaker

The American soft-coal strike is settled, but the American railroad strike lasted just long enough to bring Mr. Truman before Congress with a proposal for drastic anti-strike legislation, including authority to draft strikers into the armed forces whenever a strike had been proclaimed as an attack on the public. The House of Representatives, spoiling for a fight with labour, enthusiastically agreed; the Senate, with greater caution, sent the whole question to a Committee, and finally decided to delete the controversial "work or be called up" clause from the Bill. There are still not a few leaders in both political camps who do not like the idea of a head-on conflict with the Trade Unions in an election year; and it cannot be taken as certain, despite Mr. Lewis's provocation, and the action of the Railroad Brotherhoods, that legislation at all like what Mr. Truman demanded will actually be passed. On this side of the Atlantic, very great relief at the ending of the strike will necessarily outweigh every other consideration; for the effects on transport of relief shipments should not now be serious, and the situation in respect of American aid to the starving world should be, at any rate, but little worse than it was already. To the extent that we can look beyond this consideration to the repercussions on American political opinion, it looks as if the warring factions of the American labour movement will be driven by compelling necessity to act together, at the penalty of defeat—very serious defeat, too—if they still fail to accommodate their differences. But there are as yet no signs that the leaders understand this—or at all events, that either Mr. Lewis or Mr. Green does. The C.I.O. leaders do understand it, and are the more awkwardly placed because they do.

PARLIAMENT : Busy and Brilliant

Wednesday.

It has been a busy, indeed a brilliant, week in the Commons. First, on Thursday of last week, came the Report Stage of the National Insurance Bill. In the discussion of these human problems the Opposition took notably little part, but the occasion produced some of the ablest speeches of this Parliament. Outstanding was Jim Griffiths's apologia for his decision on the Friendly Societies. This was a sincere and convincing argument which left few people in any doubt that the Government's attitude is the right one. However the notorious "pledge" was embarrassing and the Government might conceivably have been defeated, had the amendment been differently sponsored. In particular the speech of Maude, K.C. (Exeter) was puzzling. His brief was clearly to beat the Government with the largest stick he could lay hands on. This he did effectively but at immoderate length. His speech was a spicy mixture of Drury Lane and the Old Bailey, but it would be doing him a disservice to suggest that it betrayed any particular interest in the Friendly Societies. In the event he, more than anybody else, was responsible for driving most of the waverers into the Government lobby; which may have been what he intended. A little later, on the motion of Silverman (Nelson and Colne) to delete from the Bill Clause 12, with its faint shadow of a means test, Labour members were more rebellious; and, in spite of a most vigorous intervention by Herbert Morrison, 44 of them voted against the Government.

Friday saw the debate on Egypt. Again there were some first-rate speeches, notably those of Wigg (Dudley) and Wilkes (Newcastle-upon-Tyne Central). Both have ability and an extensive knowledge of the East Mediterranean. Wilkes, in particular, is a confident, colourful speaker. Eden was, as ever, moderate and competent; but he had a bad case and he knew it. Most of his back-benchers who followed scorned his moderation on a subject which stirred their emotions and, casting off the mantle of international morality which is being worn this season in Tory circles, stood revealed in the basic bath-towel of Colonel Blimp. Churchill approached the problem as a purely military one and invoked his full authority to warn the country against this "dangerous" break with the past. Bevin's reply was more attuned to modern thought. This was easily his best performance in the House as Foreign Secretary and he roused the Labour benches to real enthusiasm by his sensitive analysis of the problem. Like most public men, Bevin reacts to applause and was clearly delighted by the welcome he received from his own supporters. The day was marred by several displays of ill-temper from Churchill, which were acutely embarrassing to both parties. There is nobody for whom the great majority of the House feels more natural affection and respect. But his "duality of character," to which Bevin referred in rebuking him on this occasion, is most marked; and his now frequent outbursts of petty ill-humour are, to the general regret, robbing him of the position which his finer qualities should assure.

On Monday and Tuesday of this week the Government's Iron and Steel proposals were debated. Out of a number of good speeches, Phineas gives high marks to those of Mort (Swansea East) who spoke for the workers in the industry, Evans (Wednesbury) who spoke as a business man in close contact with the industry, Gridley (Stockport) a comparatively enlightened industrialist and Thorneycroft (Monmouth) who developed in a rather sinister speech the ideological defence of private monopoly. On the front benches John Wilmot and Duncan (City of London) stole the show. Wilmot took full advantage of his first big occasion with a speech which was attractive, bellicose and full of argument. Lyttelton's elephantine pleasantries seemed rather out of place afterwards. Duncan, who is certainly not a parliamentary glamour-boy and exudes the odour of the manse, still delivered a formidable challenge to the Government on industrial and technical grounds.

PHINEAS TIR[illegible]IUS

THE OUTLOOK FOR EDUCATION

Education has again and again been described as the Cinderella of the public services. Cinderella, however, was fortunate in a pair of shoes which, small as they were, fitted her elegant feet. Miss Wilkinson, less fortunate, has to cope with the problem of two educational shoes of an alarming tightness. She has taken over an Act which, with all its shortcomings, makes large promises; but she has neither teachers enough nor buildings enough, either in existence or in early prospect, to give her even half a chance of satisfying the expectations raised by the Act.

Of course, both these shortages were expected, and were taken into account when the Education Bill was being discussed in Parliament. But it was pretty widely assumed that, in both these respects, educational needs would be given a high priority; and a great many people besides the regular educational enthusiasts were assuming that, quite soon, the minimum leaving age would be going up to sixteen. What was not anticipated was either a general shortage of almost everything, including man-power of usable quality as well as materials, or, more specifically, as acute a shortage as actually exists of present or prospective accommodation both for pupils in schools and for students in training for teaching posts.

By this time, most people understand how serious the difficulties are; and there is some danger that this very seriousness may be taken as a reason for doing nothing much about them. Harassed, and often not very enthusiastic, local authorities, face to face with the sheer impossibility of building for years to come the sort of schools they were clearly meant to build under the Education Act, receive with scant satisfaction the offer of temporary huts which look like costing nearly as much as had been contemplated for permanent new buildings, with the prospect of having before long to incur a second round of expenditure in replacing the huts as soon as the supply situation eases up. They are inclined to shrug their shoulders, and to argue that, as they cannot carry out the intentions of the Act in the field of secondary education, they may just as well let things stay as they are, and in effect go on with the old elementary system, merely changing its name to secondary without any transubstantiation of the mental food. Moreover, they are, in some cases, disposed to argue that, if there will be no schools to permit more and better accommodation, there will be no need to reduce the size of classes, and therefore no need to train nearly so many teachers as seemed to be indispensable when the Bill was passed.

Side by side with this sloth of the education authorities—or say, rather, of a good many of them—goes the slowness of the Ministry itself in getting its schemes of emergency teacher training effectively under way. This is more serious, because if, as happens now, ex-Service men and women who have volunteered to be trained as teachers, and have been regarded as suitable, are told that they must hang around for months or even years after demobilisation before their training can even begin, a good many of the volunteers will certainly drift off into other occupations.

A similar situation exists in the Universities and Training Colleges. The Universities, besieged in every faculty by many more would-be students than they can see how either to teach or, especially when residence is involved, to accommodate, will be likely to give priority to students preparing for other careers as long as there is a real doubt of the changes that would make teaching more attractive being carried out at all soon. This is particularly serious in the field of higher education, and ties up with the discontent about the salaries and prospects offered in secondary schools under public control. The Training Colleges are not affected in the same way, as they have not to face the competitive claims of a number of other faculties; but they too, or the authorities responsible for them, may show less enthusiasm for expansion if there is doubt about what awaits their pupils in the schools when they have been trained.

Indeed, the high enthusiasm of a few years ago, when the Education Bill was taking shape, has already cooled a great deal; and the cooling of public sentiment and of local authority enthusiasm is already reacting strongly on the men and women who must be attracted into teaching if the quality as well as the quantity is to be improved—or, indeed, if the quality is not to fall. This question of quality, and that of the attractiveness of teaching as a profession, are bound up with reduction in the size of classes more than with any other single factor. A smaller class gives the teacher a real chance of doing better and more individual work. But smaller classes are impracticable without both more teachers and more accommodation.

There is yet another depressing factor. The Government, and with it the local authorities, is pledged to get the new County Colleges going within three years of the actual raising of the minimum school-leaving age to fifteen. The sooner the age is raised the sooner will this additional burden, calling for yet more teachers and buildings, have to be assumed. *If* the raising of the age could, even now, be deferred, the easing of the local authorities' burden would be double; and it is tempting for the less progressive authorities to go as slow as they dare, in the hope of staving off thereby the date at which they will have to bring the County Colleges into being.

What solutions can be offered to these primary and depressing difficulties? None that are complete solutions; for education cannot escape bearing its share of the formidable difficulties which obstruct the building of a better Britain at any point. But clearly the local education authorities must be induced to make a really full use of the temporary buildings which they can get created under the Ministry's scheme, and must not be allowed to hold back in the hope of being able to avoid having to do the job twice over. If it were known that even temporary buildings would be rapidly made available for teaching on an adequate scale, that knowledge would of itself do something to arrest the fall in the spirits of many who have been contemplating entry to the teaching profession. Secondly, the opening of emergency training centres must be speeded up, and a larger total intake than is at present provided for, even on paper, must be regarded as the necessary minimum; and at the same time it must be made clear to the Universities that the training of teachers should, for the next few years, occupy a high place among the conflicting claims of the faculties for new entrants.

The Universities, of course, are concerned not only with training teachers, but with a great deal besides. The Government has indicated its willingness to supply them not merely with as much money as they show themselves ready and able to spend, but even with more; and already the State is finding, in one way or another, the major part of the cost of University upkeep. In spite of this, there is the same tendency towards declining keenness in the Universities as there is in other parts of the educational world. This attitude blocks in particular the expansion of the social services and of training for social service, as well as for teaching; and it is doubtful whether it can be overcome without much more drastic Government action than there has been any hint of so far, in order to compel the Universities to adapt themselves to modern needs. Indeed direct Government action may be needed to bring into being new Universities in parts of the country that are at present badly served, or not served at all.

In saying all this we are not criticising either Miss Wilkinson or the Chancellor of the Exchequer. These Ministers have been working hard at the problem: but, if their efforts are to succeed, they must both act more drastically and appeal more directly to public opinion, in order to rekindle the lost enthusiasm of a few years ago. This feeling can be aroused; it has died away because so many people assumed that, with the passing of Mr. Butler's Act, the thing had been done, and because these people have not fully realised yet that the thing shows no sign of being done on any scale approaching what was promised. Public opinion has shown its readiness to give education a high priority; but it is a plain fact that this priority is not being in practice secured. There are not in sight enough teachers to reduce the size of classes at all, or enough buildings to make any real reorganisation possible. And this is not wholly because the thing cannot be done; it is partly because the persons and institutions in whose hands the task lies are doing a good deal less than they could.

COTTON—A THIRD WAY

THE cotton industry, even at the end of its long period of decline between the wars, was still Great Britain's largest export industry. On the average of the three pre-war years, its exports were valued at £64 million, as against £43 million for machinery, £40 million for iron and steel, and £36 million for coal. Evidently, if we are to budget in future for an export trade 75 per cent.—or on the lowest calculation 50 per cent.—greater in volume than pre-war exports, we cannot afford to let the cotton industry decline still further into a producer mainly for the home market, with only a residue of its export trade left. Yet this is what will happen unless the industry is quickly and thoroughly reorganised, so as to reduce its costs, and unless, at the same time, it secures an increased labour force by offering steady employment at considerably higher wages and with considerably better working conditions than in the past.

This is the essential problem which the Working Party appointed by Sir Stafford Cripps under the chairmanship of Sir George Schuster has attempted to face. It was told to face it on the assumption that the Government was not proposing to nationalise the cotton industry, and that accordingly the required reorganisation would have to be carried out under private enterprise. The Working Party has certainly done its best; but it has failed to agree. The Chairman, backed by the Trade Union members and by some others, has produced a comprehensive report; but most of the employers, with Professor Jewkes of Manchester, have attached a series of reservations which are in effect a sabotage of the entire scheme.

The majority's plan rests on the assumption that the industry's plant must be drastically mechanised, above all in the spinning section, and that it is out of the question to leave this process to voluntary action by the firms concerned. It is pointed out that failure to achieve drastic reorganisation quickly will result, in face of the shortage of labour, in high costs because it will mean that nearly all the mills will continue to work at much less than their full capacity. It accordingly proposes a big scheme of amalgamation and grouping of mills for re-equipment and also a putting out of production of a number of mills, in order to bring down the number working to that which can be fully manned by the available workers. The minority rejects both any form of compulsory amalgamation and any plan for the elimination of surplus capacity, and trusts to the working of the profit incentive to bring about both mechanisation and the elimination of obsolete plant, and also to the offer of higher wages to secure enough labour, provided that each worker can be made to yield a considerably greater output.

This minority report has produced, not unnaturally, a rejoinder from the Trade Union members of the Working Party, to the effect that their assent to the majority report is conditional on the employers' co-operation in working it, and that, if the employers insist on full freedom to do anything they please, the workers cannot regard themselves as in any way bound. Indee the central machinery proposed by both majorit and minority would clearly be worth little o nothing if all the compulsory parts of the schem were knocked out of it, as the minority desires.

This conflict of view is of major importance for what the Cotton Working Party was asked t do was, in effect, to produce a model for th relations between the State and the variou sections of industries which do stand in need o extensive reorganisation, but are not schedule for early nationalisation. Clearly, no agree schemes are practicable in such cases unless the is an acceptance of the idea of planning, or unles the plan provides for a maintenance and ex pansion of exports, or, again, unless there a adequate safeguards against the adoption of price fixing, restrictionist policies designed rather t protect existing capital assets than to ensure th reorganisation of the industry on a basis o up-to-date equipment and methods. No les clearly, any scheme satisfying these requiremen can work under a system of private enterpris only if most of the employers, as well as of th Trade Unionists, are prepared to play.

In the cotton industry, it seems, the employer representatives will not play. This being so, is very doubtful whether the majority's plan ca be made to work. But, if it will not work, wha alternative is left? None, except nationalisatio which was ruled out from consideration by th Working Party. It does not, however, follo that there is need to nationalise the entire cotto industry out of hand. The majority repo recognises that the key lies in the spinning sectio which in effect determines both the size and th character of the weaving and finishing section As far as we can see, the answer to the employer refusal of Sir George Schuster's middle way that the cotton spinning industry will have to b nationalised, and that the taking over of th part of the wider industry will compel the othe sections to come into a scheme such as the majori has in mind. This will make possible a muc more rational and well-designed replanning o the spinning section than is likely to be practicab in any other way. Public ownership of a *ke section* may well prove, in other instances beside this, to be the clue to the adjustment of relatio between public and private enterprise of which th Government is in search.

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this colum goes to F. J. Whitwell.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of pape and give details of origin. Address to THI **ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.**

An official of the Ministry of Food stated i London last night: "On the first application it wa stated that Taylor was suffering from malnutritio

"We were advised that a person suffering fro this complaint did not require extra rations, so th application was refused."—*Daily Mail.*

Mr. Robinson, chairman of Watford Britis Legion, said:

"The British soldier is not a thief. There is n better scrounger."—*Daily Mail.*

Our officers and men in Germany and Austria a doing a grand job in just being British.—*Dai Sketch.*

I observe that the Labour Party propose to abolis the school certificate examination, subject to furth consideration.

Is this because they know the working class boy with whom they intend to fill the secondary school are too deficient mentally, or too lazy, to achie the standard previously accepted by the middle an upper classes as the minimum indicative of reaso able competence?—Letter in *Birmingham Mail.*

Members of the Institute of Magicians are entertain prisoners at Wormwood Scrubbs on June but it has been considered inadvisable for escapologist to show lock-breaking and handcu release tricks.—*Daily Mail.*

A LONDON DIARY

My only regret at John Strachey's appointment as Minister of Food is that it prevents his promotion to a Service Ministry. Apart from the Prime Minister, the Defence Committee at the moment is sadly lacking in minds with a real grasp of the connection between policy, strategy, and organisation. Strachey has that sort of mind, and I hope that, when the food crisis is over, he will be permitted to return from the Ministry of Food to an even bigger job suited to his unusual talents. Meanwhile, his lucidity of analysis, glad sufferance of fools, and charm of exposition will be needed to placate the British and induce the Americans to cough up. Will he be aided or hindered in this latter task by the fact that he is remembered in the U.S. as one of the very few Englishmen who have been detained on Ellis Island as a dangerous Communist? The *Daily Herald* obviously regards his past as a ghost to be kept in the office cupboard. On the day of his appointment, Victor Thompson described his activity between 1933 and 1939 as follows: "He wrote able and bitter political books, some of which were regarded as minor classics of the Left. He also worked on the old *New Leader* under H. N. Brailsford. Then came the war." This, of course, was the period when Strachey made his name in Britain and America as a Socialist speaker and writer by leading the campaign for unity and Communist affiliation. The series of studies of Socialist theory which he published are still the one brilliantly successful attempt to translate Marxism into the King's English. As for his work on the *New Leader*, it was entirely overshadowed by his association with Victor Gollancz and the Left Book Club. I wonder why the *Herald* should be so anxious to cover all this up. After all, several of our most able Cabinet Ministers have, in the course of their political careers, resigned or been expelled or denounced by the Labour Party.

* * *

To be appointed Governor of Malta has always been considered a great honour, commonly conferred on a distinguished member of the Services. It is certainly a difficult job to-day, involving most delicate problems of national aspirations as well as of military command. It is a disquieting symptom of the times that the job was, I understand, offered to nearly a score of public men before it was accepted by Mr. Douglas, M.P. for North Battersea. I wish Mr. Douglas every success; the novelty of his appointment will make his success, if he achieves it, all the more conspicuous.

* * *

Sir Sholto Douglas' statement that denazification in the British Zone is to have a "definite term" lends point to the following story, which comes to me from a reliable source. The management of the *Essener Steinkohlen Bergwerke*, of course, worked energetically with the Nazis to increase coal production and the heads of the firm, Tengelmann senior and junior, were both arrested as prominent Nazis. Tengelmann junior was a high officer in the S.S. and introduced Göring to Thyssen in the 'twenties. Naturally their foremen were mainly Nazis; several of them who were responsible for brutal treatment of foreign workers are still in their jobs. A Communist miner, who had worked illegally against the Nazis between spells in jail, posted up a Communist Party resolution calling for Military Government to investigate the position of the Nazis in the company. He did this without obtaining the required permission for posting a notice, since he would have had to ask permission from the very men the resolution attacked! When sent for interrogation to Reklinghausen, he was told by a British officer that he should have worried about the Nazis seven years ago. When he replied that he had first been imprisoned for anti-Nazi work as early as 1933, the officer's attitude became more friendly. He was told to supply the officer concerned with any evidence about Nazis in the management. A little later, another British officer addressed a meeting of representatives of the management and miners at this pit, saying that it had been decided to stop denazification there. In future, anyone who denounced Nazis would himself be liable to punishment. When miners complained that poor food was being served in the canteen owing to the negligence of the management in having failed to repair the electric oven, one of the Nazi inspectors who went to investigate the trouble was blamed for the bad food. He then tried to get the miner who accused him into trouble with the British "who had just said that anyone who denounced Nazis would be punished"!

* * *

All such incidents aid the revival of Nazi ideology. Something similar seems to be happening in the Universities. I have a letter in front of me from a young German.

> And now to the Universities: I myself am angry, because I have seen in the lecture rooms many of my Hitler Youth torturers while I have to look on inactively having come home too late from the prisoner of war camp. The active Nazis among the professors have been dealt with. But the lukewarm ones who took part in much and who even now are involved, though they remain outwardly in the background not wanting to stain their fingers, these people have now a fine time. They simply put the peg one hole back, speak of Bismarck instead of Hitler, of Hindenburg and Frederick the Great instead of Keitel, and lie in wait—let us hope that the day will never come on which this sentence could be completed. . . .
>
> We are lacking Anti-Nazi professors of a real calibre . . . Göttingen has predominantly Nazis as students, but also the opponents are not few in numbers. Something can be done still and many a student may be won. What is now being sown will be harvested in 20 years. We are in such urgent need of spiritual help. The others inherited their weapons from their grandfathers and have shown how useful they are for the capturing of the masses. We have to forge ours first.

* * *

Last week in the House of Commons Mr. Stokes raised the disagreeable question of the position of German Prisoners of War working in this country for next to no pay and on an indefinite sentence. Their position is legal as long as there is no peace treaty with Germany. I know that it is true that some of those who came recently to this country from P.o.W. camps in Belgium were in a deplorable condition of undernourishment, and also that in spite of the threat of starvation in Germany, most of the P.o.W.s here ask bitterly whether it is in fulfilment of our democratic promises that they cannot go back to their wives, or return to work on their farms, twelve months after the war is over. It may be that, physically, their conditions are better than they would be in Germany. But they do not readily believe stories of hunger in Germany, nor, in the absence of any promise of a date on which they can return, will such questions affect their minds. It is comic, too, that they live under strict Prussian discipline when the Allied pledge is to demilitarise Germans. A proper inquiry is needed.

* * *

Some readers may recall a review in this journal about 1936 which started by saying that the book reviewed was "the most terrible ever written." It dealt with the character of the next—and now the recent war. In one respect the book was incorrect; bacteriological weapons were not used. But all the other horrors were gradually realised down to the destruction of city life in much of Europe. They were more than realised at the end in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I've just been reading a similar book called, correctly, *One World, or None.* It is "a report to the public of the full meaning of the atomic bomb" by a group of scientists and others (including such well-known names as Niels Bohr, Einstein, Condon and Walter Lippmann). They particularly stress that in the full glare of secrecy the new arms race has already begun. As things are now going the death of society, as we have known it or hoped it would be, is not only possible, but extremely probable.

Meanwhile news comes to me from America that the atom bomb is already out of date. Another group of U.S. scientists were thoroughly annoyed with Roosevelt and Churchill for deciding merely to wipe out a couple of Japanese cities. They declared that they could have destroyed all life on the Japanese islands. The method is to spray the crops with a poison that would finish for many generations all plant and animal life, and make the soil permanently barren, as they put it, and so upset the balance of nature that nothing may survive. A friend in a position to know says that, even allowing for the natural enthusiasm of inventors for their own inventions, these are no idle boasts, and that the newest methods are likely to be more efficient than atom bombs, even if, in time, these can be despatched by rockets with a 3,000-mile range. I can't judge; details of racial suicide are a bore.

* * *

Some such feeling that Victory has still to be achieved and will only be achieved when our scientists are differently employed may account for local "apathy" about V-Day celebrations which is indignantly reported in a host of English newspapers. It may be the reason why people do not want a beanfeast just now is less complicated. I can only guess on the basis of the recent experience of a Sussex village I know. The Parish Council decided with some reluctance to hold Victory celebrations, but to confine them to a children's tea and sports. The Women's Institute were asked to manage the tea. It held a meeting last week and reported, unanimously, that the members thought it wrong to have a special tea for children when so many children on the Continent were starving. The Parish Council has called off the whole thing.

* * *

Though a new Crystal Palace is bound to come low in our building priorities, I'm glad that it is to be recreated as an attractive cultural and amusement centre for the whole capital as well as for the deficient wastes of South London. Perhaps the finest spectacle the Palace ever saw was its own blazing destruction just before the war. A friend who was standing in a dense crowd below one of the towers that was wrapped in flame, bought an evening paper which proclaimed in blazing headlines that the tower had already fallen! In its last days the Palace became rather dreary and fly-blown: its biggest draw was the two-mile motor racing circuit. If these large-scale entertainment centres are what people want, there are few finer sites than the top of Sydenham Hill.

CRITIC

PAX

Pax Sovietica is strictly Communistic,
Pax Americana is purely egotistic,
Our *Pax Britannica* is still Imperialistic.

Pax Sovietica spells social revolution,
Pax Americana means retail distribution,
Our *Pax Britannica* supports a Constitution.

Pax Sovietica is palpably defensive,
Pax Americana is insidiously extensive,
Our *Pax Britannica* is growing too expensive.

Pax Americana earns the Soviet's invective,
Pax Sovietica opposes Pax elective,
Our *Pax Britannica* is largely retrospective.

Pax has no security confined to one vicinity,
Pax is indivisible, a composite divinity,
Pax must be a unity begotten of the trinity.

Pax ideological, imperial or commercial—
Pax is non-existent if *Pax* is controversial.
Pax must be unanimous, complete and universal.

Three part *Pax* is fleeting, its duration is diurnal,
Pax that is not total leads to warfare more infernal
Only *Pax Atomica* is perfect and eternal.

SAGITTARIUS

ITALIAN ELECTIONS

To attempt prophecy on the result of the Italian election with its fifty-six competing parties and its added complexities of national, ideological and psychological struggle is impossible. On June 2nd Italy goes to the polls to decide the fate of the Monarchy and the structure of the Constituent Assembly. Although both questions are to be settled on the same ballot paper, it will be by no means a case of the same people in the same parties voting on both occasions for the same sides. For example, the small group of Piedmontese Monarchist Communists, although finding themselves in agreement with Signor Togliatti on the question of the Constituent Assembly, are bound to find themselves in a different camp on the subject of King Umberto. But the political peculiarities of Piedmontese Marxist Monarchists (and let it be said that they are a very small group of traditionalists of a very peculiar nature) are not by a long shot the main problem facing the Socialists and the Communists in Italy.

There are many more problems, and the decisions of the Socialist Congress in Florence last April point rather significantly to that fact. The main struggle in this election, as it was in the communal elections, will be between the Christian Democrats on the one hand and the Socialists and Communists on the other. The much publicised *Qualunquisti*, since their fiasco in the communal elections when they succeeded in winning only fifty-two seats, seem to have disappeared in their own verbiage and newsprint and the only apparent manifestation of the party is, perhaps, the activity of terrorist gangs such as the *Squadriste di Azione Mussolini* and their new comrades in arms the *Partite Democratico Fascista* (!) whom the *Qualunquisti* have always been accused by their enemies of concealing.

However, apart from demonstrating the weakness of the *Qualunquisti*, the communal elections showed fairly precisely the strengths of the main parties. They certainly pin-pointed the fact that the Christian Democrats were the strongest single party in the country, and on appearances stronger than the combined Socialist and Communist Parties. This time, the influence of the Church on the South, the fear of Communism which permeates large sections of the population, the compulsory vote legislation and the fact that abstention in the North is likely to be greater than in the South by virtue of the North's larger electorates, will heavily favour the Christian Democrats.

The position of the Left-wing parties is therefore difficult and complicated. Like Parri's Action Party they have suffered loss of prestige and support in the country. This, because as members of the Government they operated under the impossible condition of being in fact only a sub-commission of the Allied Commission. As a result, lacking any executive powers, they naturally, when the time came, had to take full responsibility for their necessarily negative activity. They have also lost much support as a result of the Communists' attitude, or lack of attitude, on the sorely felt subject of Trieste. At long last Togliatti has emerged with a statement which amounts to supporting the conception of "the Italianity of Trieste." What this means, very few, and least of all the Communists, have been able to define, and the general result has been to encourage the strong nationalist feeling of the Italian people towards a rejection of the Communist Party.

That this has been appreciated by the Socialists was clearly shown at their conference in Florence. Saragat and others saw that the strong link which existed between the Socialist and Communist Parties and the Communist loss of popularity over Trieste were resulting in the Socialists being tarred with the same brush of disfavour as their Communist comrades, and had in fact driven a number of Right-wing Socialists to vote for the Christian Democrats in the communal elections. At Florence, therefore, the loose unity of the Socialists and Communists was, if not broken, made more loose when Congress voted fifty-five per cent. against fusion.

This anti-fusion move was supported by Lombardo, the new secretary of the party, sympathised with by Saragat, at present heir-presumptive to Nenni, and opposed by Nenni, who was awarded by way of compensation the chairmanship of the party but who is considered in many circles to be on his way out of the active hierarchy. The lesson learned from the communal elections by the Socialists was that the Christian Democrats might be able again to beat the Socialists if they campaigned in a combined Socialist-Communist bloc, and the non-fusion decision was meant to inform the public that a vote in the elections of June for the Socialists was not a vote for the Communists. How much effect this has had on the electorate it is impossible to say.

The actual results to date of the communal elections (for some areas have not yet voted and will not vote until after the June elections) were that the Christian Democrats won 36,070 seats while the Socialists and Communists together won 35,833 seats. In Milan the voting was somewhat different, with the Socialists polling 220,000 votes, the Christian Democrats 163,000, the Communists 157,000 and the Madonnina (a bloc of the Right-wing Liberals, Monarchists and *Qualunquisti*, who spent fifty million lire on the campaign) 43,000.

It looks, therefore, as if the election will be decided between the three main parties, with the Socialists and Communists combining in the Assembly to hold the Christian Democrats in check. What the Leftists fear more than anything else would be an Assembly with a small group of independent parties holding the balance between the nearly equal Christian Democrats on the one hand and the Socialists and Communists on the other, and wielding power out of all proportion to their numerical strength or national support.

The question of the referendum on the Monarchy is an entirely different issue and one which, although not simple and uncomplicated, can be seen more easily and more clearly. In the North, Republican feeling is strong, and there is little doubt but that the North will vote solidly against Savoy. In the South, the Monarchy is more happily placed, but the decision of the Christian Democrat Congress in favour of the Republic is worthy of note as a key to the orientation of opinion even in religious circles. It was generally conceded in Italy, when it was not a question of voting on the matter, that the monarchy was doomed. Umberto, "*Il Principe Dentifrice*" (the tooth-paste prince), was in very little better favour than his father, but to-day, directly as the result of the negative policy of the Republicans, it is possible that the position of the Monarchy is healthier. There is a school of thought which is Republican, but which is not prepared to dismiss the Monarchy because it does not know what will take its place. Assured of the anti-Monarchist feeling of the country, the Republicans and the Left have merely stated their Republican desires, and the fact that they wish to dispense with the Monarchy. They have not said what form their new Government will take and have failed to give the people any clue as to their intentions beyond the bald statement that they will create a Republic. The feeling among a section, and possibly a large section, is "better the devil you know than the devil you don't," and the failure of the French Assembly to produce a satisfactory constitution may have an encouraging influence on these people to cast their votes for the devil they know. In these circumstances it is possible that many Republicans will vote for the Monarchy or, alternatively, in spite of the compulsory voting law, refrain from voting.

It may be that the deciding factor in the election will not be the powerful Socialist, Communist and Christian Democrat Parties—these are known quantities. The result may in fact turn on the large mass of people who belong to no party, expressing, even in this politically passionate country, few political opinions and much disillusionment, but whose voting or abstention from voting will decide the issue. It is possible that June 2nd in Italy will once again demonstrate the power of the floating vote. EDWARD ELLISON

THE AMERICAN SCENE

(*By a Correspondent*)

The first impression of the visitor to the United States is inescapable. The bright lights, the shops stuffed with food and all good things, the streets jammed with cars bear witness of an abundance that most Europeans have never known or have forgotten. But even a short stay shows that in seeking this luxurious normality American people are attempting to throw off very serious anxieties and to forget both the future and the rest of the world. This is also a symptom of the reaction to an abnormal but long-sustained phase in American life when the country had a purpose—a purpose symbolised by the personality of President Roosevelt, first as the saviour of the economic system through the New Deal and then as a man who guided and inspired the United States into a belated but terribly effective resistance to Fascism. Now the United States has no purpose and very nearly no Government. President Truman attempts at intervals to re-create the old enthusiasm for the policies of Roosevelt, but it is clear that he neither understands them nor really believes in them. In any case he has largely lost control of the mechanism of Congress which, deprived of a leader and a purpose, follows the pull of private interests only checked by an apprehensive glance toward forthcoming elections.

Inside the country a losing struggle is being fought between Government controls and their evasion by an inflationary black market. The effective cost of living rises and with it comes a succession of strikes whose varied success only intensifies this process. The great and magnificently equipped American armed forces have disintegrated so quickly that the remnants of them have been left disorganised and demoralised. It is a symptom of the times that Congress, fearing the mothers' vote, refused to extend the draft, not because of any pacifist feeling but because of the alarming stories of the temptations of drink and disease among the occupying forces, a state of affairs which required a special mission of General McInerny to try to cure. The veterans of the army are everywhere complaining about the treatment they are receiving, particularly on the point that is so sore with us, the question of housing; but here again private interests, particularly real estate interests, have held up all effective progress, although in America, unlike here, there is ample labour and materials. Instead of orderly housing schemes, building is going on for the wealthy and for industry and commerce, largely with black market materials. The power of private interests is so great that most schemes conceived in the war for planned reconstruction have been effectively sabotaged, notably that for the San Joaquin Valley in California which might have been a second T.V.A.

The most tragic evidence of the lack of any real government is provided by the prevailing attitude towards famine in Europe and Asia. The Americans feel it is terrible: they feel guilty at their own colossal consumption and waste of food; but they also feel that there is just nothing that can be done about it. Rationing, Government controls, prohibition of the feeding of wheat to animals, all seem an unthinkable return to the regimented days of the war. The feeling for these measures is diffuse and inarticulate. The interests against them are well organised and determined to get a good price for anything they give.

It is not surprising that in this economic and political atmosphere reaction has been gaining ground abroad and at home. Particularly in the Pacific area official U.S. policy has steadily favoured it. The election of the Fascist collaborator, Roxas, to the presidency of the Philippines is eminently agreeable to United States planter interests. The attitude towards Japan has changed almost overnight. Under a responsible, democratic, conservative Government, the Japanese are no longer even a potential enemy to American capital. In China, in spite of General Marshall's genuine neutrality, American officers inevitably sympathise with Chiang Kai-shek's troops against the Communists, even to the extent of winking at the use of large bodies of Japanese troops to suppress them. The *New Yorker* quotes the statement of an American officer: "We will get on all right with the Japanese; we speak the same language." Clearly in the East, like the Germans in the West, the Japanese represent the next allies in World War Three.

At home, the native form of Fascism is rapidly reappearing; it shows itself in violent "Red"-baiting and fomenting racial antagonisms—anti-Semitic and anti-Negro. The Rankin Committee, heir to the notorious Dies Committee, is pursuing un-American activities with Star Chamber methods. At the moment a number of most respectable citizens face charges of contempt of court for refusing to reveal the names of Spanish refugees for fear of the victimisation of their relations by Franco. Everywhere the Catholic Church and the ~~national minorities that it~~ controls are working up feeling scarcely distinguishable from incitation to war against the Soviet Union.

The growth of the fear of war has been really remarkable. From the fourteen per cent. who a year ago thought there would be another war in the next twenty-five years, the proportion is now seventy-five per cent. according to the Gallup Poll, and of course there is no doubt whom the next war will be against. The presence of the atomic bomb has had the paradoxical effect, in the one country that possesses it, of increasing the feeling of insecurity. The majority of the Americans do not think of themselves as using the atomic bomb but of what will happen if it is used against them: hence the hysteria about secrecy and spy scares.

It would be a mistake, however, to imagine that these tendencies are spreading without check through the people of the United States. The danger to everything for which the war was fought is now becoming so apparent that resistance to it is being organised with increasing determination. On a large scale we have the Political Action Committee of the C.I.O. whose concern is predominantly that of protection of working-class interests against the immediate dangers of inflation and the foreseen dangers of unemployment. Among the intellectuals, two new movements, the American Federation of Scientists and the Independent Citizens' Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions, have recently become active, and are now building up an increasing membership in most of the important centres of the country. The Atomic Scientists, even before the formation of the Federation, had developed a very effective method of combined political lobbying and publicity by which they defeated the reactionary May-Johnson Bill and are likely to be successful in keeping future control of atomic energy developments out of the hands of the military and, less certainly, those of heavy industry. For the first time in American history a body of men who had previously shunned politics and who had never before acted corporately have come together and are likely to be a permanent force in American life.

The I.C.C. is working more on a local basis. American political parties have long ago lost any correspondence with policies. Candidates, however, can be supported on the basis of the policies they profess and on their general record. At the moment, the issues most in the foreground are the domestic, economic ones such as the maintenance of the Office of Price Administration, which was saved at the last minute by the intervention of thousands of citizens protesting against amendments that would have effectively crippled it. Low-cost housing and support of the claims of the veterans are also being energetically pushed. The issue of civil liberties remains the crucial internal issue because on its vindication the very existence of such democratic organisations depends. At the moment there is a steady pressure against all professional employees, particularly in Universities, on political grounds, the danger of which is not so much a few score of dismissals as the cowing of the public spirit of the professional classes. There is also the need for combating the increasingly vicious propagation of race hatred. Cases like the unprovoked murder of a Negro by police in New England and the first appearance in America of an organised pogrom on a whole Negro quarter have to be fought if their example is not to spread. The legislative fight here is against the Poll Tax which disenfranchises the majority of Negroes in the South. This campaign has had some measure of success in Georgia, but is being fanatically resisted by the political machine of the Southern Democrats.

It is not surprising that, with these internal troubles, foreign policy tends to take a smaller place than with us; but with the increasing atmosphere of impending war, liberal thought in America has been roused to some degree of concerted action. A "Win the Peace" conference was held in Washington on April 6th, Army Day, having the support of a very large number of democratic institutions ranging from C.I.O. branches to women's associations. The general tenour of the speeches, of which the most notable came from the new champion of the Left, Senator Pepper, was that the United States could only preserve peace by abandoning a foreign policy which supported Fascist or neo-Fascist governments and quarrelled with the Soviet Union. Naturally the foreign policy of the British Government also came in for a certain amount of abuse, with an implication, the reverse of that made here, that American policy is dependent on British inspiration aimed at preserving British interests. It was for that reason that the Conference resolution included a general opposition to the loan, which brought protests from liberal bodies of a pro-British cast.

It is particularly tragic that in the present state of world affairs there should be so little community of liberal opinion in the two countries. Americans, even liberal Americans, know extremely little about domestic affairs in Britain; these are practically never reported in the papers. For them Mr. Bevin is the effective representative of the Labour Government. But this situation should and could be remedied. There is yet time to organise, through direct exchange of views and persons, an effective contact between progressive forces in both countries. This would vastly increase their separate influence on the Governments, and, if widened to include similar forces in France and elsewhere in Europe, should serve to ward off the real threat of a new era of Fascism and war.

THE AUTOBAHN

Because it was a fine, warm afternoon, I decided I had been working too hard. I would go for a walk; I would go to the neighbouring town about five miles away. I left the barbed wire behind me; blessed relief to walk out of this prison and along the road. At first, how pleasant just to be mixing with people in ordinary clothes, and to pass front doors that were homes, not billets for the military. But soon I began to feel how the people were looking at me. I was feeling well in the sun, striding along, twirling my stick. But in spite of the Spring and the Song of Solomonish air, I noticed how they looked at me: sullen, resentful. I was a British officer; an imposer of ration cuts; a starver of a people who had never heard of Belsen until the British went there. And I was mad, of course. Occupiers don't walk; they whirl along in motors, throwing up clouds of dust or storms of puddle-water. It was a very salutary experience. I began to see things through German eyes. It's a narrow road and there's not much room on the sides. Every few minutes you have to step into the ditch because of passing military lorries. The Germans complicate the situation with their go-carts—a go-cart is indispensable to the Deutscher of 1946; usually it's his only means of locomotion, and he uses it for everything. Sticks, coal, calories of any kind; the washing, manure, baby, electric lamps, the collected works of Goethe, Father's funeral top-hat: an expert go-carter can get them all in at the same time. There was loud confusion at the side of the road, with two three-ton lorries passing each other, and one British officer and half a dozen go-carts all being pushed into the ditch. The true Briton walks straight into the go-carters as if they weren't there, but I was never much good at that sort of thing, and it's usually me who steps into the ditch first.

It's magnificent country; typically German fairy-tale. Sloping woods of pines, white farmhouses with high roofs, trim symmetrical fields; everywhere people digging in the hope that they will stave off death until the harvest. Yards of washing hang in the sun; somebody's Mum may not be using Persil, but it astonishes me that they manage to get any soap at all. I come to the Autobahn. Children are standing on the bridge calling "Schokolade! Schokolade!" to the passing trucks and cars; they called for it before the Rhine crossing, and will probably have to go on calling for it until they are grown up, and no longer care. One of the children runs down, and walks with me for a bit. She is six years old, dark-haired, healthy enough to look at, but her shoes are in a terrible state. I'm sorry I don't carry chocolate as part of my normal accoutrement, but I ask whether her father smokes. She says her father was killed last year in the war.

In the town there are shops. Most of them are filled with luxury goods unobtainable on such a scale in England, at any rate on my last leave. Children's toys, tatty but cheap; pictures, some indifferent original landscapes, some good reproductions; Cotswold arty-crafty on a low scale—painted boxes for almost anything, bookmarkers, presents.

The most interesting shop is the Barter Shop. Only a comparatively few Germans can still afford to buy on the black market; the Barter Shop is the real economic centre of the country. In the window are all kinds of articles being offered in exchange for something else: an attractive doll for a blouse and skirt; a set of knives for glasses; a notice offers two chairs in exchange for a bed. But the predominating desire is for clothes and shoes; the exchange requested on shoes is usually fantastic. Most intriguing is a portrait of a very severe old lady, who must have been a local celebrity. She, apparently, is worth six nappies. I wished I had six nappies on me; in spite of the regulations, I would have gone in and bought her.

This again is a garrison town, and part of it is wired off for the troops; Germans can only enter if they work for us. So I leave the world of humanity and primitive exchange, and go into the perimeter to look for the Officers' Club.

The Officers' Club turned out to be a rather dreary, empty building. Some Ensa types, cutting the gloom with their accents; a Padre having tea with a voluntary woman worker; some Control Commissioners, and an R.A.F. officer with an A.T.S. subaltern. A German band ploughed sadly through the Overture to *William Tell*. They'd probably gladly have given a week's wages to risk having apples shot off their heads, so long as they could eat the bits. While the Ensa types were applauding loudly, thus demonstrating that Art is International, and The Show Must Go On whatever the personal cost, I paid my bill and left.

It was a very lovely evening, so I walked home; along the narrow avenue, between the trees, edging into ditches from time to time to make way for trucks, cars, cycles and go-carts. Presently I caught up with an old man. To my surprise, he greeted me with the conventional "*Grüss Gott*." I returned the salutation and remarked on the weather. He said yes, it was fine, but it didn't mean summer was on the way. I said it was very beautiful country. Yes, but times were bad; although the food situation, of course, was much worse in the towns. But then he added, they'd brought it all on themselves. This was a remarkable confession from a German, and I looked at him closely. He was a broad, well-built old man, with a wide face, white side-whiskers and a bushy white moustache; on his head he wore a little alpaca cap with a shining black peak and a button above it. Yes, he repeated, they'd got what they deserved; but did I know the real cause of all the trouble? I began some general condemnation of Hitler, but he shook his head fiercely: no, no, it wasn't that at all. I enquired what it was, then; speculating to myself whether it would be the Versailles Treaty, Bolshevism, or the British administration of Egypt. He gripped my arm and, with Churchillian contempt, spat two words: "The Autobahn!"

Well, I said; well. For though I didn't want to appear dense, I couldn't see the point. But he soon illuminated me. Just think for a moment, he said, of all the material, money, energy and planning that went into these roads. For what went down them? The Military. A very impressive sight when they drove against Austria or Czechoslovakia, but what happened when they went down the Autobahn against America and England and, at the other end, Russia? They came back again; and after them, up this beautiful, wonderful construction, came hundreds and hundreds of American tanks. Or else the bombers came and bombed the bridges, and then it was no use to anyone. And it was no good, he declared, refusing to let me interrupt, no good at all saying it was all the Nazis' fault; the idea had been conceived long before Hitler, and approved by the whole German nation, except for a few visionaries, like himself.

Now, he went on, if I wanted to consider the proper method of locomotion, there it was: he waved his stick over a ploughed field, and on the other side I saw a railway line. Nothing, he said gravely, could defeat a really sound railway system. Look at England: it had good railways, and it won the war. Look at Germany: it had the Autobahn, and the war was lost. At this moment, an engine came along the line; it had escaped from Emmett's studio. The cylinders sloped to a hump in the middle, and between them and the bogey was an extraordinary collection of tubes, ratchets and knobs, all hissing and spluttering and bobbing up and down. It had a large funnel with a cowl on it, and no visible driver. The old man took off his hat, and stood stiffly to attention; I very nearly saluted. Peace, he said, after a suitable pause, was dependent on railways. I saw an international army of drivers and *wagon-lit* attendants, of Pullman-car waiters and guards in their international uniform, waving their universal flags of red and green . . . but it was time to go. Before I said good-bye, I asked him whether he had ever worked on the railways. No, no, he said sadly; he was a road engineer.

CHARLES DIMONT

STRAY THOUGHTS

A MEAGRE column is sometimes better spent in telling the concert-goer what to look out for, than in expatiating upon something or other which he hasn't heard and may not have the chance to hear for years. Here, then, are three occasions: the first London performances of Tippett's *Symphony* (Central Hall, June 6th) and of Rubbra's *Missa Cantuariensis* (St. Bartholomew's, June 20th); and a repetition of Monteverdi's *Vespers* (Central Hall, July 5th). The Monteverdi has been adroitly timed to raise the curtain on the first post-war Festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music; and together with Britten's *Rape of Lucretia* at Glyndebourne on July 12th it should give our visitors a flattering picture of the range and enterprise of our musical life. The I.S.C.M. Festival itself comprises two Sunday afternoon concerts by the B.B.C. Orchestra at Covent Garden on July 7th and 14th, together with three week-day concerts for smaller forces at the Goldsmiths Hall.

I suppose it is the modesty becoming to a host which has restricted the English contribution to two works (Elisabeth Lutyens's *Three Symphonic Preludes*, and Alan Rawsthorne's not very characteristic *Cortèges*); but the foreigner who contrives to get here a week earlier will certainly obtain a richer notion of our creative talent from the Cheltenham Festival, which includes the new version of Britten's *Piano Concerto* (July 2nd), Rubbra's *Sinfonia Concertante* (July 3rd), his newly revised *Second Symphony* (July 4th) and Tippett's *Double Concerto* (July 5th). The more we study the I.S.C.M. programmes, the clearer it becomes that different countries conceive the function of the Society in a different light. The eminent Swedish composer Hilding Rosenberg, who is totally unknown over here, told me recently that he was not sending anything in to the I.S.C.M. because he wished "to make way for younger men"; and perhaps a similar feeling prevailed in England. Yet the Festival programmes contain music by Stravinsky, Hindemith, Schönberg, Prokofiev, Webern and Bartók.

I am very glad, by the way, to see Covent Garden's delightful auditorium used for concerts again. But it was surely a mistake, on a recent Sunday, to turn out the lights, and limit our vision of the uninteresting "flats" which were used to enclose the orchestra. Of course, we all dislike glare; but the growing (and very well-meant) practice of plunging concert-goers in the dark requires, perhaps, more consideration than it has received. The first sufferers are the score readers—a small but highly important minority; imagine the feelings of a student who had gone to great trouble and expense to secure a score of the *Symphonie Fantastique* for the recent Hallé performance at the Albert Hall, only to find it quite unreadable when he got there! Nor am I by any means convinced that every orchestral work must benefit from a darkened house; and certainly no *prima donna* should be asked to sing operatic arias in the dusk. Yet this was the fate which befell Mme Josephine Strey at Covent Garden.

A soprano who calls herself Madame and proceeds to tackle "Dove sono," "Pace mio Dio" and "Casta Diva" is evidently flying high, and I cannot honestly pretend that the voice which pierced the gloom proved adequate to their requirements. But Mme Strey possesses a certain sense of style, and the audience was plainly delighted. I put this down, not simply to the general decline of vocal standards, but to the obvious fact that the British public is suffering from operatic starvation; the whole country is full of returned servicemen who have made the Grand Tour and acquired the Italian taste for opera, not only in the theatre, but in the concert-hall. There is virtually no "live" opera on the B.B.C.; the proposed Swedish visit has fallen through; and we are thus indefinitely restricted to the sadly shrunken repertoire of Sadler's Wells and Carl Rosa, with no Wagner, no late Verdi, no *Fidelio*, no Russians and no Richard Strauss. (But note, in parenthesis, the enterprising revival of Wolf-Ferrari's *Quattro Rusteghi* at Sadler's Wells on June 7th). Here, for what it is worth, is a suggestion: why not vary our concert fare by occasionally giving a complete act from one of the more symphonic operas? The younger generation knows next to nothing of mature Wagner; why not give them Act I of *Die Walküre* or Act III of *Tristan?* Excellent practice for our younger singers, too; and a capital opportunity for the Covent Garden Opera Trust to spot a few winners.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

RADIO NOTES

ON the principle of taking my material wherever I happen to find it, I lift a most telling point from a review by G. W. Stonier in last week's NEW STATESMAN. "One test of the truly successful radio play is this: do we forget . . . to visualise a stage?" That depends partly on composition, partly on production. If the sequences are too long or too static, if the producer insists tactlessly upon visually superficial details such as doors opening and shutting, glasses chinking, ill-considered studio chatter—then at once the flats go up in our minds and we are looking at a stage picture upon which, sooner or later, some kind of curtain must descend. It was a point in favour of the radio version of Bridie's *The King of Nowhere* that the scenes were sufficiently "dissolved out" into the medium for us not to visualise a stage. Another point scored by this Scottish production was the extremely competent acting of the cast. If the same cannot be said of Marius Goring in the part of the would-be dictator, the fault was largely the author's: to ask an actor to parody ham acting, all the evening, is to set him an impossibly vexatious task. I look forward to a production from the Scottish set-up in which the play chosen may be worthier of the considerable talents they evidently have at their command; at the same time suggesting to them that music which means nothing definite, but merely serves to fill gaps in the script, is a dramatic ineptitude.

"Fred Marion on Test" proved a damp squib. Mr. Marion failed signally to strengthen the case for telepathy, since in two out of the three tests he showed himself hopelessly at sea, while in the third the correspondence between his picture of the event and that which we had previously heard recounted in another studio, was far too tenuous to be at all conclusive. This eccentric and perfunctory little experiment (incidentally quite exciting to listen to) could not be held to disprove the claims of telepathy, which rest upon a broader basis of observation and do not, I believe, depend upon "mediumistic" powers such as Mr. Marion appeared to display.

Mr. G. M. Young's evocation of Victorian England, in the series "If You'd Lived Then," was a rare treat. Up till now this series has been rather schoolmasterish in tone and treatment; but Mr. Young contrived, by an admirably modulated manner (his cough was most effective) and a sequence of pictures very skilfully built up from the vast store of his knowledge, to make us see, hear, and even smell the England of eighty years ago. A very notable performance, which we should like to hear again. The week was also distinguished by a remarkably lucid exposition of "The Essentials of Rhythm" by that excellent (but too seldom heard) musicologist, Henry Boys. This was a talk for experts as well as for laymen, and Mr. Boys commands a very charming and persuasive manner. Planners of programme C would do well to engage him for a series of illustrated talks on those aspects of music which receive little attention at present because they are difficult. Mr. Boys possesses the art—so rare among scholars—of treating an abstruse subject with ease and clarity, but without filleting it.

RECOMMENDATIONS.—*Sunday, June 2nd.* Cello Sonata (Pierre Fournier and Ernest Lush, 2.30 p.m.); Who Discovered America? (7 p.m.); Concert (9.30 p.m.).

Monday, June 3rd. Borodin (7.5 p.m.); Looking at a Town (7.40 p.m.); The Three Sisters (9 p.m.).

Tuesday, June 4th. Concert (7.30 p.m.); Piano recital (Jan Smeterlin) (10.15 p.m.).

Wednesday, June 5th. Violin Recital (Max Rostal, 1.15 p.m.); Concert (Sir Thomas Beecham, 7 p.m.).

Thursday, June 6th. Concert (3 p.m.); Television (9.15 p.m.); Ode to Victory (10.5 p.m.).

Friday, June 7th. Concert (Szigeti and Gerald Moore, 6.55 p.m.); Town and Country (8 p.m.); The Royal Thames (9.30 p.m.); New Poems (11.30 p.m.); Pfitzner Recital (11.45 p.m.).

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE MOVIES

"Artamonov and His Sons" and "Sand and Life," at the Tatler

"The Years Between," at the Leicester Square

Ten minutes or so of perfect cinema reward the visitor who stays on for the supporting programme at the Tatler. We are gazing at the ribbed undulations of sand: what life is there in this desert? The camera proceeds to tell us. Beetles, spiders, lizards, scorpions, ground squirrels, hoopoes, jerboas, buzzards, pythonic snakes, gazelles, foxes, eagles: to the common mind a staggering list. One's amazement, however, is riveted on the creatures themselves, perfectly photographed. A dozen dramas, seen with an eye for beauty as well as action, unroll in as many minutes. Minotaur grapples with scorpion; a beetle rolls its huge ball of savings up an incline; the fox darts from shrub to shrub to escape the assaults of a golden eagle; a hedgehog, armoured against attack, ends by making its meal off a rattlesnake. No more vivid exploration of nature has been made in any film, unless one excepts the underwater visions of *Epaves*. The commentary is briefly factual and (refreshing in a Russian film) draws no moral. This was supplied by the woman sitting behind me who exclaimed when it was over: "Why, they're just like us—always fighting, I mean, and killing one another."

Gorky is the only considerable novelist whose books have translated more than adequately on the screen. He owes this not only to his realism but to the fact that his fellow-countrymen live and breathe that realism. *Artamonov and his Sons*—a novel I haven't read—may lack the breadth and continuity of the Autobiography, but it offers imposing fragments. The method of this chronicle film has been to embroider certain episodes in the history of a freed serf and his descendants, stitching them loosely together with captions. Artamonov kills a man and builds a cotton factory; the family prospers, degenerates; in the third generation violence returns with the factory boiling over in revolution. Many of the scenes—the heir's wedding, the final strokes of dilapidation—have a harsh power, backed by a rich sense of period. "Studio direction by Eisenstein," we are told in the list of titles. While the gaps in narrative are too wide to be bridged by the imagination—we badly need a few of the missing chapters—this film makes its impression, and is a good deal more remarkable than most of its reviewers have allowed.

It comes to life, which Miss du Maurier's stage-success-into-film never looks like doing. The subject—a returned soldier—is topical, but the handling remains stagy and artificial. All the characters belong to an English shop-window for an Exhibition, respectably conveying tone. *The Years Between*, I am afraid, rather lags behind.

Mr. Agate's first film criticism was a panegyric of Chaplin, published twenty-five years ago in the *Saturday Review*. Since then he has been an ebullient if not wholehearted spectator of the changes that brought speech and colour and transformed Vitagraphs into Odeons. Ninety-five of his articles are collected in *Around Cinemas* (Home and Van Thal, 15*s*.). They make jaunty reading, especially in their digressions, anecdotes, and the general "business" in which this writer excels. He is properly ecstatic about Dovzhenko and Clair, but lavishes an equal number of superlatives on *Madame Curie*. Many films, such as *The Great Dictator*, *Grapes of Wrath*, *Le Jour se Lève*, *Moana*, *This Happy Breed*, the Gorky trilogy, seem not to have come his way; the reader will be disappointed who expects to find here a coherent perspective of the cinema as such. Still, there's a pretty water-colour of Lillian Gish. And when Mr. Agate doesn't hit the nail on the head we enjoy almost as much the resounding thwack of hammer on thumb.

William Whitebait

AT THE THEATRE

"The Winslow Boy" at the Lyric Theatre

A Programme of Ballads: Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith

Mr. Rattigan's new play, *The Winslow Boy* is a sure-fire hit. It is a reconstruction of the Archer Shee case, the fascinating story of the Osborne boy, to clear whose character from a petty accusation the loftiest and most inaccessible heights of British law were brought into action. But the theme itself is not less interesting than its treatment by our most expert dramatic craftsman. All the action takes place in the placid atmosphere of a nineteen-tennish suburban drawing-room. There is no court scene. The famous advocate who, in the newspaper reports, we remember to have been Sir Edward Carson, is now Mr. Emlyn Williams, who shows that personality does not need a hook nose to be intense and terrifying. If one had the strength of mind to turn away from the play for a moment to watch the onlookers it would be an experience to examine the faces of an audience so completely held as this was by the extraordinary climax to the first act, where the lawyer carries out his cross-examination of the boy in the drawing-room, to test his innocence.

The acting of Michael Newell as the boy is more than equal to the occasion. In the second half of the play, Mr. Rattigan sticks too closely to the rules of good theatre, and shows us the bad side of first-class commercial drama by bringing in a sub-plot of love proposals and counter-proposals which is rather more relevant to what the public wants than to the principal theme of the play. But his skill does not flag, and the court action is recorded by a series of messengers in the Greek manner, of which the most telling, if the least Attic, is Miss Harrison's housemaid, who makes a sudden descent from the upper region to go to court and bring back news of the verdict in person.

The first part of Mr. Laurier Lister's fifth poetry recital at the Lyric, Hammersmith, was given to Border ballads, spoken by Miss Alice Darch and Mr. Francis James. The speakers compromised with the song and dance tradition by using "a certain amount of co-ordinated movement," and their intelligence, complete self-possession and vocal control resolutely prevented us from feeling any of the cold embarrassment of Flora Poste in face of a concentrated return to the native idiom. The coy clod-hoppings of "Riftly, raftly, now, now, now," and "The Old Cloak" were a waste of time for speakers so much at home in the more sophisticated comedy of "Young Beichan," and "Queen Eleanor's Confession," the chill glamour of "The Great Silkie of Sule Skerrie" and the starkness of "Lord Randall."

In the second part of the programme Mr. Robert Speaight read *The Ancient Mariner*, the poem which "Q" claimed as a perfect sublimation of the language and feeling of the original ballad. Mr. Speaight knew all about the moral intensity latent in the poem, but those expressive hands and that perfect intonation were not quite right for the loneliness and uncanny horrifics of the main action; Life-in-Death left one admiring but quite unchilled. One feels that the Mariner, glittering eye and skinny hand and all, was rather too flamboyant a personality to conform to the rules of good taste; Mr. Speaight, one suspected, would have been personally in control of the band of seraph-men, and would most probably have prevented the entire over-exciting affair from happening anyhow.

THE LONDON MUSEUMS

The functions of the National Gallery, the Tate, the Victoria and Albert, and the British Museum have hitherto been confused with results often delightful to the satirist. (At auctions museums have been known to bid against each other!) If the conspicuously sensible report just issued by the Massey Committee is acted upon—including the recommendations for an annual grant to the Tate and for a change in the lamentable administration of the Chantrey Bequest, the public benefit will be capital. But mysteriously and most regrettably the position of the British Museum was outside the Committee's terms of reference, though it has been one of the worst "overlappers." Moreover, it is just the museum the condition of which has most needed diagnosis. For its fabulous treasures have for the most part been so arranged as to afford a minimum of enjoyment. Lack of space was largely responsible, but in many departments of the museum there was no attempt to make the best of a difficult job, no awareness of modern principles of display.

The anthology of exhibits now visible to those entering the Museum by its North door is a delight and a revelation. It extends from palæolithic tools to Regency porcelain, and from China to Peru. The most sensational and significant feature is that at long last the British Museum authorities have woken up to the æsthetic value of their objects from Africa and the Pacific, which hitherto have afforded a classical example of how to make beauty invisible. I cannot too vehemently urge a study of these unfamiliar masterpieces of sculpture.

Roger Marvell

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JONATHAN CAPE

Correspondence

WESTERN EUROPE'S DILEMMA

SIR,—I suppose Mr. Gerald Barry was trying to be funny in his letter to you last week. But he succeeded only in being offensive and—if I may be permitted to say so—slightly hysterical. The future of Western European civilisation is not a subject that lends itself to attempts at humour.

We have to face the fact that three political and economic systems, which differ profoundly from one another, are now struggling, if not for mastery of the world, at least for existence in it. They are the totalitarian Communist system, based on Russia; the Social-Democratic system, based on Western Europe; and the free knockabout capitalism of the United States. The Russians have already established a comprehensive political and economic *bloc* behind a line stretching from Lübeck to Trieste; and it is clear that Soviet influence within this *bloc* is intended to be exclusive. The Act of Chapultepec, signed at Mexico City just before the San Francisco Conference, constituted a full regional agreement, covering defence policy and economic co-operation, for the American continent. The validity of such regional agreements was subsequently established in the Charter of the United Nations. This was the moment for those who are opposed to regionalism of any kind to protest. So far as I am aware, they did not do so.

What are the democracies of Western Europe to do, in the situation thus created? They are all committed to political principles which are the antithesis of totalitarianism. They all profess to believe in a policy of planned economic expansion, designed to prevent a recurrence of mass unemployment. They are all dependent, in a high degree, upon trade with one another. Last, but not least, they are all comparatively small countries. As the *Economist* recently observed: "It would be difficult to imagine a more conclusive case for purposive economic integration."

The only practical alternatives to a free union for the democracies of Western Europe, are (1) gradual absorption by one or other of the great federations to the east of them and to the west; or (2) a renewed attempt to impose integration upon the European economy by force. Not until "Western Europe" has been firmly established can genuine collaboration with the Soviet Union be achieved. For, so long as the present struggle of Social-Democracy for survival continues, the danger of a third world war must exist.

To revert to Mr. Barry's letter. He dislikes the idea of three rival Powers, with their satellites, "playing for position." But his own solution, a world dictatorship by the "Big Three," seems to me to be not only fantastically unreal, but open to the gravest objections if it could ever be worked.

I said it was incredible folly to limit industrial production in the West of Germany, because that is what we are deliberately doing, at a moment when Europe is crying out for capital goods. We know little or nothing about what goes on behind the iron curtain, but I cannot believe the Russians are guilty of any such folly in the East. While we indulge in the planned *sabotage* which Mr. Barry applauds, they construct.

As for Dr. Rathenau, Mr. Barry should really study recent history before bursting into wild diatribes based on total ignorance. I recommend him, as a start, to read the life of Rathenau by Kessler. If he had already done so, he could not have written as he did about that very remarkable man.

Meanwhile, the peoples of Europe desperately want peace; and they are not getting it because of the intransigence of a handful of men in Moscow, and the failure of the Western democracies to agree upon a constructive policy of any kind. In these circumstances I very much hope my letter to *The Times was* read with attention in the Kremlin, as Mr. Barry suggests it may have been. I dare say my *dossier* there is quite as good as his. Perhaps even better, because they know well enough that I advocated an Anglo-Soviet pact, without cessation, from 1926 to 1939.

I advocate it to-day. But on terms which will make friendship and co-operation a reality instead of a sham. Nothing does more harm to Anglo-Russian relations than the attitude of fawning subservience to the Soviet Government adopted by some of our fellow-travellers. It is worse than "appeasement"—it is a kind of masochism.

ROBERT BOOTHBY

SOCIALISM *v.* DEMOCRACY

SIR,—Had Mr. Zilliacus desired to illustrate, rather than refute, my thesis, he could hardly write more convincingly.

My point was, quite simply, that it has not yet been found possible to employ Beelzebub to cast out Satan. To all but the blindest, it is now obvious that civilised mankind has embarked on a series of religious wars, not less hideous, and far more destructive, than those which desolated Europe in the seventeenth century. The eager combatants on both sides, and the preachers, of whom Mr. Zilliacus is not the least forceful, prate, no doubt sincerely, of their desire for peace when their religious aims are achieved. But all the time they are traitors to humanity because it is their own want of toleration and human kindness which causes the destruction, and the end cannot be complete victory, but compromise based on disillusion and exhaustion.

Thus Mr. Zilliacus cannot conceive that as a Conservative I can possess aims other than the "restoration of Capitalism in Europe" or "fighting Communism." I had supposed that if human language can be plain at all I had made it clear that these are not the ends I had in mind. These religious or ideological wars and tyrannies are destroying the human race and my plea was for a scale of values which protected and defended toleration and put an end to the fighting. I recognised in Mr. Zilliacus the Habakkuk Mucklewrath of the new fanaticism, but I had hardly hoped that he would illustrate this belief so aptly, not by rejecting my plea, but by his inability to see that it had been made.

All Souls College,
Oxford

QUINTIN HOGG

SIR,—By a coincidence Brigadier Maclean's and my letters appeared side by side. Between them they bring out the real issue: in this country all of us, Conservatives, Liberals and Labour alike, are equally attached to democracy as a way of life and a system of government.

The real difference between Socialists and Conservatives is that we Socialists believe that democracy as a way of life can survive where it still exists and can be restored or established where it has disappeared or never existed, only through measures of Socialist economic reconstruction. For whether we like it or not, we are living in a world where the old social order is breaking down. The first world war, the Russian Revolution, the Fascist (i.e. Capitalist) counter-revolutions, the great slump, and the second world war, are all stages in a vast disordered process of transition from a social order based on private profit-seeking enterprise to one where economics have become national housekeeping.

In this country democracy is still a working reality, and we Socialists are showing our loyalty to it by using it to bring about the minimum of social change necessary to prevent a relapse into mass unemployment and general misery and frustration that might endanger democracy even here. That is our mild British way of doing our bit in the world social revolution. In most of Europe, where democracy disappeared many years ago and was replaced by Fascist and near-Fascist dictatorships, where indeed democracy has never existed except for a few years after the first world war, the social revolution is

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assuming far grimmer and uglier forms corresponding to the harshness of the counter-revolution which it has overthrown. But it is mere political illiteracy to confuse Fascism with Communism.

Fascism is capitalist counter-revolution. The Fascist regimes were incapable of solving the social and economic problems which they had demagogically promised to settle and which the people had returned them to power to settle. They could not give the people bread, and so they were compelled to feed them with blood and circuses. Communism, on the other hand, represents the forces of social revolution in countries where democracy has either never existed or been destroyed by Fascism (Liberal Socialism leads the social revolution in countries like our own, where democracy really works). Communism really does solve the social and economic problems that the people want it to solve.

I am optimistic about what will happen in Europe if the Labour Government joins with the Soviet Union on the basis of the Anglo-Soviet Alliance and applies our own policy, which states that Socialism is a fundamental necessity for the restoration of democracy in Europe. That means we should encourage co-operation between all parties, and notably between Socialists and Communists. European society is more complex than Russian: the working class is largely better educated; the middle and professional classes are more important; the peasantry are politically conscious and organised; the traditions of Liberalism are much stronger.

Dimitrov, in his speech that was so sadly misquoted by Professor Laski and the *Daily Herald*, expressed the view that the world war, which was also a revolution, has shattered the capitalist bottle-necks to the successful working of political democracy; by overthrowing the Fascist and Satellite States it has also got rid of the big financiers and bankers, of the higher civil servants, police and army commands and judges, who manned the machinery of the Fascist and Satellite States. Therefore, Dimitrov pointed out, there was no reason why Socialism should not be achieved by the slower but "painless" means of broadly based democratic coalitions, exercising the right of the vote and majority rule. Given ten years of that on the basis of Anglo-French-Soviet partnership in Europe and I believe democracy and civilisation will revive in Europe.

Conservatives, of course, do not believe the world's journey to Socialism is really necessary. They identify the preservation of capitalism with the defence of civilisation, because they cannot distinguish between the class interest of the rich and the interests of the vast majority, who are the poor.

K. Zilliacus

Sir,—There is a neurosis all too prevalent which German psychologists would, I feel sure, call Humpty-Dumptyism, e.g., Democratic—something of which you approve. Fascist—something of which you don't approve. Realistic—a policy which you know to be wrong but think expedient to pursue. Unrealistic—a policy you know to be right but have not the courage to pursue. And Working-Class—in my innocence I had always supposed that must mean the class of people who work, such as a navvy or a banker or a Cabinet Minister or a bricklayer like Mr. Churchill. Reactionary—reactionary to what? Progressive—to what? There was never such a briskly progressive body as the Gaderene swine. I would humbly suggest to Mr. Zilliacus and alas! many others that they read *Alice in Wonderland*, and remind them of the comfort which this religious lady derived from "that blessed word Mesopotamia."

Anthony Asquith

SPAIN

Sir,—Your correspondent's article on Spain was very interesting. Yet in all these subtle calculations and negotiations that he speaks of there is one thing lacking. That is the threat of force. Franco will not go unless there is concerted action against him, or if he does go the change will be one of names only. To get the generals to act effectively they must be convinced that, if they don't, something unpleasant will happen.

Are there then any signs that such action is being contemplated? According to the New York correspondent of the *Observer*, there are not. The removal of Franco "might upset the present balance of forces in Europe." In other words, this horrible Fascist regime may be kept in power by the Democracies through fear of Russia. How is it then that for months past the B.B.C. has been telling Spaniards—truthfully, in my opinion—that the real objection to Franco is that he is the propagator of Communism?

The facts in the Spanish case are very simple. During the Civil War, Government Spain came under Communist influence because Russia supplied it with arms, whereas the Democracies would not. But the Communists made themselves so disliked that when it ended nine out of ten of the Spanish exiles were violently anti-Communist. They formed groups from which the C.P. was rigidly excluded. Then Hitler fell. They naturally expected that Franco would fall too and that Spain would be allowed to choose the regime it wanted by means of elections. The rise of a Socialist Government in Britain seemed to make that certain, for they remembered the warm support its members had given them during the Civil War. But this Government, whilst speaking harshly of Franco in public, continued to strengthen its relations with him in private. Franco, after some months of anxiety, concluded that his position was safe and that he could embark on a new campaign of terrorism against Spanish Liberals and Socialists. The result of this is that the Spanish Republicans, who were lately so friendly to Britain, have turned against us and are beginning to look for assistance to Russia.

Can the British Government not see the danger of this? The Arabs got into Spain on the invitation of a Christian. Napoleon was asked in to settle a quarrel in the Royal Family. Spaniards are a passionate people who have always been ready to cut off their noses to spite their faces. If the Spanish Left goes over to Communism, then no mitigation of the Dictatorship can ever be expected. When it falls, as it is bound to do some day, you will have a Communist Spain filled with hatred of this country. Let the people who decide our policy remember that, as any psychologist will tell them, a pathological fear brings about the very conditions it seeks to avoid.

What then is the solution? It is very simple. Let Britain and the United States agree on concerted measures against the Franco regime and the Generals will act. If the Powers are firm, the regime that follows will be one that most of the Left can honourably accept. But this must be done soon or it will be too late.

Gerald Brenan

Aldbourne, Marlborough.

B.B.C. NEWS

Sir,—Your Radio correspondent alludes in your issue of 18th May to my recent letter to *The Times* in favour of a more generous allotment of broadcasting time for news and explanatory comment at a peak listening period of the evening, and particularly for a better balanced reporting of Parliamentary debates in that period. He would seem to adopt the argument with which I was familiar at Broadcasting House that such an arrangement would provide "a dull half-hour." My answer always has been that a period up to half an hour, varied as occasion demands, need never be dull if intelligently used to give listeners a vivid picture of the day's chief events.

As an illustration of the way the present rigid fifteen minutes bulletin conflicts with the national interest may I cite the treatment by the B.B.C. of momentous tidings last week of the Government's new proposals for Indian self-government. Into the 15 minutes crowded bulletin at 9 o'clock on Thursday was pressed a brief and hurried summary of the Prime Minister's announcement in the Commons. But

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listeners who wanted to hear a recording of Lord Pethick-Lawrence's explanatory broadcast on that day or of the Viceroy's historic appeal to the people of India on the following day had to wait each evening until after the short 11 o'clock news bulletin. (Lord Wavell's broadcast was also relayed at 4 o'clock on Friday afternoon, but comparatively few people had an opportunity of tuning in then.)

Under my proposal for an elastic period at 9 o'clock a satisfactory summary of each speech would have been heard when the greater part of the nation was able to listen to it. To those who were not interested there was, and is always, under the present two-programme system an alternative feature.

I have frequently heard the suggestion that a fuller and more balanced report of Parliament and world affairs can be given as soon as a third programme is introduced. It is my contention, however, that good news reporting is one of the foremost and unconditional duties of the B.B.C. and should not be subordinated to other aspects of programme policy.

Sevenoaks. **ARTHUR MANN**

SCIENCE AND SECRECY

SIR,—In your issue of May 11th you print a letter of Dr. Alex. Comfort protesting against the sentence imposed on Dr. May. Dr. Comfort is a poet, and as a poet and as a man he does well to voice his protest. The subject is one that seems to me to be of supreme importance.

There has of late crept into the conduct of affairs in these islands a certain exactness and implacability (perhaps the result of our long submission to the disciplines of emergency?), which, however well it may become a people united in the prosecution of a desperate war, augurs ill for the early realisation of that "more liberal dawn" for which we hoped and fought. We should notice it now.

A few days ago, in Eire, a man was allowed to die, who, by no very magnanimous gesture on the part of his Government, could have been saved from the fate to which his principles had driven him. The same tragedy is about to be re-enacted in Ulster. And in Belfast recently a man of advanced years and uncertain health was sentenced to one month's hard labour, because, in a moment of muddle-headed depression, he appeared in public, naked. These are isolated cases, small things after all? But the road to despotism and inhumanity is paved with such sad trifles as the death of a courageous man or the imprisonment of a wander-wit.

I will be reminded that the first duty of governments is to govern, and that they can only do so by protecting themselves. Even if this be so (and the axiom is not so obvious to some of us) its truth presents no mandate to mercilessness. It is the boast of our politicians of all parties that they govern by our free consent. Why, then, this present fear that their power rests on such uneasy foundations that they must be reinforced with calculating severity? Surely liberality should be the prerogative of selective government.

I add my sincere protest to Dr. Comfort's, and hope that others will feel moved to do the same.

8 Marine Parade, **J. MIDGLEY**
Holywood, Co. Down.

SIR,—One item in the forthcoming and utterly fatuous experiment on the atomic bomb in the Pacific is wittily denounced by "Sagittarius" in your current issue. A whole Noah's Ark of animals is to be towed out to act as a living target. Now mere sentimentality about animals, in a world so racked with human agony, is, of course, silly; but wanton cruelty is always debasing and, unless checked, has a way of spreading. The Nazis, after all, were only flagellants to start with. Before long these pachydermatous scientific "observers" will be looking round for further victims. The little girl, it will be remembered, who was taken to see *Othello*, and who was deeply fascinated by the scene in which Desdemona is strangled, remarked cheerfully to her mother, on coming out of the theatre: "I suppose, of course, they have a fresh lady every night."

21 East Avenue, **HAROLD BINNS**
Bournemouth.

EX-SERVICE MEN'S COLLEGE

SIR,—The prospect that large numbers of ex-Service men and women will be unable to start their courses at the universities next October is one that few university teachers can contemplate without acute discomfort. It is quite true that accommodation in the existing colleges and universities is already strained to breaking point, and any large increase in the number of students they can accept is, for a variety of reasons, impracticable. I hope, therefore, that your excellent suggestion that a temporary college might be established in London which "could draw upon the teaching staff of London and nearby universities" will be given serious consideration. If we cannot provide for those men and women now we shall lose many of them altogether, and we shall be losing students who are not only entitled to special consideration for the services they have already given to their country, but whose experience during the past few years has peculiarly fitted them to receive the sort of instruction a university can give.

I have not had time to discuss your suggestion with any of my colleagues, but I feel sure that the response to an appeal for lecturers would be quite embarrassingly large. If the teaching were undertaken by volunteers from all the London colleges the extra burden on any individual would be negligible, and the students would have the advantage of being instructed by a faculty of all the talents. I offer two suggestions. The temporary college could function in the evening and not in the day time. In that case, accommodation might be found in one or other of the day colleges. Alternatively, Birkbeck College, which has now reverted to its peace-time routine of evening lectures, might be willing to provide the accommodation needed for a temporary college working in the day time. The advantages of housing it in one of the existing colleges are obvious—more particularly if the guest-college is able to provide library and laboratory facilities.

Of course, there would be difficulties. The temporary college would require considerable organisation, and on the administrative side would, no doubt, need some full-time members of staff. But the country is full at present of ex-officers with executive ability looking for something to let it loose upon, and some of them would even be among the students of the temporary college.

Meanwhile, time is precious. I put my name down for two lectures a week.

Queen Mary College, **JAMES R. SUTHERLAND**
Mile End Road, E.1.

FOOD PARCELS

SIR,—There are many who share Mr. Gollancz's anxiety and shame at the policy of starving the Germans, and yet hesitate to address a Socialistic Prime Minister on the subject.

He writes: "Are you aware it is still impossible to send food parcels to Germany?" Of course we are painfully aware of this, but surely the prohibition lies at the heart of Socialism? Conscience has been nationalised. Private charity, like private thrift, has no place in the world Mr. Gollancz has striven so conspicuously to create. The law which forbids selfishness, forbids with equal justice unselfishness. Our food is not our own property by right of purchase for us to dispose of as we think fit; it is a ration allowed us by the State in order, as has been made clear in the Parliamentary replies quoted in Mr. Gollancz's recent pamphlet, to keep us strong to work for the State. In this, as in all matters, the State is the sole judge of what is best for us.

There are many of us who deeply resent this principle, but it is hard to see what right Mr. Gollancz has to complain. He has probably done more than any living man to secure its popular acceptance.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

In the summer of 1871, Dostoevski and his second wife returned to Russia after four years in Italy, Switzerland and Germany. Having flown from the claustrophobia of Russia, they were now sick of Europe. The grateful, the insidious power of domestic peace had gradually dulled Dostoevski's craving for the gaming-tables of Baden, and when he returned in later years to Germany for his health, the temptation to play could not in any case be easily satisfied, even if it awoke again. The German authorities had stopped roulette and had driven the gamblers to Monaco. The exiled Dostoevskis returned with no possessions but what they had in their trunks; they found that the furniture of their flat had been sold up, and their books too. Even the crockery and the pots and pans had gone; and the moment the family established themselves in a new flat, with furniture bought on the instalment plan, the duns began to knock on the door and apply, with threats, for the old debts. It was a situation which had, as we know, no novelty for the Dostoevskis. Painfully we contemplate the familiar mess. And then—not miraculously, not by a stroke of drama, but systematically, the new broom begins to sweep and create the remarkable order, prosperity and respectability of Dostoevski's last ten years. A five-year, a ten-year planner in skirts who has survived the revolutionary phase of marriage, comes to power. Anna Grigorievna, the secretary and wife, possessive, patient, mild, jealous, hard-headed and inflexibly dominant, organises his work, goes into publishing, issues his books herself not "on sale or return," but for cash in rouble notes, collects it like a grocer, scatters the parasitic relatives and takes the adamant-lead in the family quarrels. *The Possessed* (sometimes called *The Devils*) is finished. And, not knowing what else to do, Dostoevski takes a regular job, at a regular salary for the first time in 25 years, editing a paper and writing the monthly articles, which eventually were published as *The Diary of a Writer*.

The Diary of a Writer is one of those bulging compendiums, one of those literary waste-paper-baskets, which all novelists long to fill; a respite from the stifling concentration and deceiving ecstasies of novel writing. Stories, newspaper cuttings, comments, anything that comes into the mind, can be stuck in such diaries, and may be inflated with the chronic wind of unexamined and even self-contradictory opinion which the discursive super-ego has been accumulating for years. To slacken the tension, and to relax at some period into journalism, has been the private, indeed the public, longing of many an artist; and it is commonly a very profitable thing to do. Because Dostoevski's *Diary* was topical, because it was a collection of ephemeral views and sermons in skeleton, the book was considered by some of his contemporaries to be greater than his novels. If that appears to us to be a silly judgment, it remains true that Dostoevski's journal is very readable. It has become, for sinister reasons, far more readable than it was, say, 15 years ago. It has again become topical.

For, about two hundred pages of *The Diary of a Writer* deal with those grey, sullen and perennial mysteries: the intent of Russian Imperialism in its relation to the West, and the Russian sense of a humane mission to the world.

A useful abstract of what Dostoevski wrote about these subjects particularly was published in Lausanne at the end of last year.* Much of it is dated; much more must be retranslated in the reader's mind. It must be remembered that Dostoevski wrote during a period when the national sense of inferiority was strong and required the reviving drug of rhetoric. We must remember Dostoevski's own description of himself as a writer who needed to push things always to extremes: it was the defence of the sensationalism of his novels. But the main ideas, suitably reworded in the reader's mind, have a familiar sound since 1917. Dostoevski believed Russia had a "world mission" which was "to preserve the image of Christ" and "to realise universal humanity." To this mission no bounds could be set. There was a fundamental opposition to the West for contradictory reasons: first, because Russia had long ago lived through what the West had reached; secondly, because of the incompatibility of the "forms" of the West. These "forms" (he was writing in 1870) were in any case doomed because of the intransigence and hypocrisy of the middle classes in Europe before the rising proletarian movement. Dostoevski hated Socialism and Communism—and hankered after them at the same time—but Europe had in any case nurtured its own destroyer. One spark, he wrote, and the whole of Europe "will explode and destroy itself"; Europe will come cap in hand to Russia — Nathaniel Hawthorne had earlier on the same hope about Britain and America—Europe will have to swallow her contempt for what she calls Russian barbarism; and, at last, Russia will begin to fulfil her mission to the world by dominating Europe.

Vague, dated, ambiguous words; and yet they do not seem so strange to-day. We can head them off for a while by asking a few questions. What does Dostoevski mean by Europe? Sometimes he seems to mean Germany—the only European country he knew well; sometimes he seems to mean Mediterranean civilisation, hated because it is Roman Catholic; sometimes it is a continent inhabited only by the Russian exiles, liberals at this time; and how Russians have disliked their exiles under every dispensation! (They were a reflection on the Russian system.) Britain, Dostoevski has never heard of. We smile when we read that Russia is to rescue us from Socialism; has Dostoevski leaped ahead to the time when the State shall wither away? Yet this was the vision of a middle class German Jew. We cannot but remember Dostoevski's face as we read; that face so marked by envy, the shames of persecution, the noble face of a man who nevertheless seems to have shuffled, with some look of duplicity, into the picture. One listens to him, astonished by his shrewd hits, but remembering all those inflated speeches one has heard in Ireland, Spain, Germany during the last twenty-five years or more. Outside the rich intellectual vineyard of Western Europe, there is a clamour to get in and, at the same time, an angry cry that our grapes are sour. How often has one listened to the Spaniards, men like Unamuno, preaching the glory of not being European, the excellence of belonging to an African world, tribal, classless, anti-social but humane; to talk inspired by the "world mission" of saving man from science, the middle classes, Socialism, democracy, etc., etc., in the name, not of the image of Christ, but of the Immaculate Conception or the Sacred Heart. Holy Ireland, Holy Spain, Holy Russia and Unholy Germany; yes, opening Dostoevski's *Diary of a Writer* one has the impression of something wearily familiar. The mystique of chauvinism uses the same words, and makes the same apology. And then, one recalls the situation of Dostoevski himself. Travel can be a great narrower of the mind. He had got out of Russia to be free—to be free mainly of his creditors—and like the exiles of his country he was, owing to the poor social stamina of the Russian of that time, in real danger of going to pieces. Dostoevski in Europe was like the characters in Turgenev's *Smoke*, which shocked him so much. Dostoevski's first journey to Europe—and for him Europe chiefly meant Germany—was a disaster; his journey with his second wife was marred by his gambling obsession, his poverty and his debts. He had almost no taste for observation, but lived habitually in a fog of theory. It is extraordinary that there are very few incidents taken from life in the political pages of the *Diary*.

The feeling for Russia has been the life-blood of Russian literature and no man who has felt the poetical emotions of patriotism can fail to be moved by many of Dostoevski's pages. But between chauvinism and love of country there is a difference; and one gapes when, after he has invited us to be destroyed in order to fulfil Russia's mission, Dostoevski cannot understand European mistrust. One has the malicious notion that Dostoevski's famous intuitions are so often right because of the disingenuousness and duplicity which were so marked in his character: he has everything both ways! Germany is arrogant and will break France. France is revengeful and will break Germany. A time table, a time table, we cry to all the prophets who make so free with the centuries and who swoosh around in the sea of general ideas with the abandon of sea lions. Germany will attack Russia. Germany and Russia will be eternal allies. Both are "God-fearing" nations—ominous phrase—but when Germany attains total power—exact observation—she will come to the end of her spiritual tether. She has the fatal weakness of the Protestant. To Dostoevski, the novelist and average citizen in the café, nations were persons. And yet, although a later generation has denied it, the following words do not seem untrue:

> The whole Russian people have no notion of restraint or proportion. They have the need to go beyond all limits, the need to go over the edge of the abyss. . . There is a need for negation, even among the most positive, even among the most pious, a need of denying the most sacred feelings, the most cherished ideals.

Unfashionable words, suspect psychology—but are they untrue? And then this, written at the highest pitch of chauvinism during the war with Turkey:

> The fools do not understand that in our huge country which has no resemblance with Europe whatever, even military tactics—supposedly common in their application—are different from the European kind; that European tactics, which are based on money and huge manpower, will come to grief because of the very nature of our terrain, and because our strength lies in the immense extent of our country . . . Europe would break itself against the strength of ours, for she would never have enough money, nor organisation strongly enough knit, to undertake such a war. And when my countrymen realise this strength of theirs, we shall not need to make war: Europe will believe in us and will discover us like another America.

Constantinople must belong to Russia. On this Russia must never compromise. In the Orient the sun rises, a new dawn for humanity which will learn at last what are the true interests of civilisation. For surely a civilisation as glorious as the European—so glorious but so unexportable—will not go down fighting to the defeatist war cry of "*Après nous le déluge.*" Even if it takes a century, Constantinople must be Russian. Why does Europe not understand that this is the Russian fate?

The strength of Russia, for Dostoevski, lay in its passivity, in its amorphous feeling for the common, the undenominated people, who were not split into classes like the Europeans. (Still, Dostoevski was a petit bourgeois!) He dreaded the materialism and Socialism which, in fact, have given Russia its strength. He twitted Socialism for its failure to seek an internationalism, which he said would be fatal. But what does it matter what he dreaded? What importance have the opinions of novelists? None for their own sake. They are important only as they stimulate and engineer the novels of the novelist. For novelists, even those who deal in ideas, seem to reach the highest levels, where they are divided men. When they write out of the contention within. What Dostoevski's *Diary* was really doing, was to provide a soil for *The Brothers Karamazov*. The contradictions, the ambiguities, the rhetoric and mystifications of *The Diary* are but shadows of the real contest of ideas in overwhelming human form, as the novelist understands it, which was to be displayed in that last enormous book. Alyosha and Ivan—they were the East and the West in his own divided heart.

V. S. Pritchett

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* *La Russie Face l'Occident*. Fyodor Dostoevsky. Lausanne. Editions la Concorde.

THE FUTURE OF CITIES

City Development. By Lewis Mumford. *Secker and Warburg.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Mumford's speciality is biology applied to architecture. Looking at man as an organism he looks at the cities man makes as organisms, too. His analysis of the process by which cities rise and decay, finally ending in an atrophy brought about as a result of their very expansion, is now famous. In his many writings he has developed it historically and sociologically, exploring territory first opened up by that great teacher Patrick Geddes, from one of whose books, published in 1904 and long out of print, Mr. Mumford takes the title of this collection of half a dozen reprinted essays.

He is not a cheerful prophet:

> We have come face to face with the lethal end-products of megalopolitan civilisation: the misuses of mechanisms, the dehumanisation of personalities, and the actual breakdown or obliteration of even sound urban structures.

His conviction is that:

> at a certain stage in every civilisation's development, the processes of expansion and conquest overreach themselves: the vital interests of man are set aside and his moral and political discipline become inadequate to control the forces that are his to command . . . The uncontrolled growth of the big cities is as much an anti-vital process as the uncontrolled destructions of totalitarian warfare.

This does not get us very far, the reader might say, this crying "woe, woe!" and blaming everything on the condition of man. Of course, man should learn to control his cities, as he should learn to control himself, but our cities are in an appalling mess, and getting messier; cannot Mr. Mumford give us advice of a more immediately practical kind? No one is more capable of doing so, and I suppose his answer—if one may judge from his writings—would be to say that since he sees the city's failings as the direct product of its tendency to monopolise all the energy and vitality of the civilisation it dominates, he can only advise us to set about regaining a more balanced environment before applying ourselves to the special problems of city planning. His advice, in fact, is that the big city requires decentralising—bringing back into the orbit of the region—if it is to escape the fate he sees in store for it.

But there is another viewpoint: that it may not be inherent in cities to kill themselves by their own aggrandisement. The socially irresponsible conurbations to which the nineteenth century misapplied the name of city certainly did so, but may not these and other examples have been the victims of circumstances that are not necessarily permanent? The great metropolis is surely a natural product of the modern world with its scientific resources and highly developed communications, and its quality of being a synthetic, intellectually conceived mechanism, detached from the soil, is in character with one inescapable aspect of modern life. Some limitation of size is obviously necessary, but does a policy of dispersal have to go with it? With our present planning resources can we not make even Mr. Mumford's megalopolis a place where the good life can be lived?

Mr. Mumford does not deny the existence of this alternative viewpoint.

> When Sir Patrick Geddes generalised the development of cities into three stages of growth, followed by three stages of decay, he admits in one passage it was open to his critics to say that this historic summary was not necessarily valid for our own civilisation. Had we not possibly found a way out of that *impasse* through the use of a science and a technic that no other age had possessed? Perhaps the death of the big city was as avoidable as the death of a modern child from diphtheria.

But he dismisses such a possibility brusquely in the next sentence and returns to his insistence on the decentralisation of the city, on the grounds that it is not biologically capable of keeping itself populated without drawing on (and draining away) the resources of the region. That may once have been true, but there is at least as good a case, before taking this defeatist view, for giving the compact modern city a chance.

However, whether we agree with Mr. Mumford's main thesis or not, no writer on town-planning is so stimulating as he in the way he uses particular issues to illuminate general topics and at the same time gives individual problems significance by testing them against a few fundamental convictions. From this point of view the most interesting of these essays—surprising though it may sound—is the one on Honolulu, a report which Mr. Mumford was invited to make in 1938 by the chairman of the City and County Park Board. He has many wise observations to make about parkways and green belts and other things Americans do so well. He is never above giving his expert attention to points of minor technical importance, yet he always keeps the great human purpose behind planning within view. For English readers the most interesting part of the book will probably be Mr. Mumford's critical study of the L.C.C.'s London plan, an essay first published in *The Architectural Review* in 1944. He shrewdly discusses various detailed recommendations and admires its humanity and imagination wholeheartedly, but then his mistrust of the big city again takes charge and he finds himself unable to accept even this plan's relatively timid departures from what he calls "an old and healthy tradition" (the tradition that the detached one-family house is the Englishman's only possible castle), but—especially in a country with as little acreage to spare as we have—we cannot escape so easily from the problem of the city's future. Its density is part of its very nature, as well as the source of its principal charms.

J. M. Richards

AFRICAN RHAPSODY

African Portraits. By Stuart Cloete. *Collins.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

It would be hard to find a richer or more flamboyant theme than Mr. Stuart Cloete has attempted in his biography of the three South African leaders—Kruger, Lobengula, Cecil Rhodes. He is aware of all its possibilities, indeed to excess. He has breathed it in from childhood like an atmosphere. He has read it up. He has turned it over and over in his mind, wallowed in its romance, its contrasts, its complexities, and its relation to the world picture.

And that is too much. One cannot make a book out of an uncontrolled sense of possibilities.

Here the form itself tends almost irresistibly to confusion. The "portraits" could have been painted side by side with moderate ease, and without losing the advantage of neighbourhood; but Mr. Cloete wants them all on one canvas. It is the conflict that excites him—the head-on collision of three worlds, mutually exclusive, yet coexistent and cooped up together in a defined area. So he has chosen to roll three biographies into one, and submerged them all, more or less, beneath the waves of historic narrative. "The tale, which is one of high adventure, must unfold chronologically. It must deal first with each man alone. . . It must slowly weave the pattern of their friendships, of their conflicts, of wars; of marriages, of deaths and births . . . of impacts and counter-impacts . . . of causes and of effects whose repercussions still vibrate."

And then the background must not be ignored:

> Behind the African scene, in the wings but controlling the puppets, were two rivals for power: Gladstone and Disraeli . . . Behind them again was the Queen. And behind Victoria other forces—the royal gardener Brown; the memories of Lord Melbourne, the idol of her youth; her tutor Stockmar, and her husband, Albert. Behind the rival prime ministers were their wives—Mrs. Disraeli, who thought her husband looked so handsome in his bath; Mrs. Gladstone, who probably never saw her husband in his bath. Forces everywhere . . .

Most of these are never mentioned again; indeed they are what a shallow thinker would call irrelevant. But, says Mr. Cloete very truly, everything connects up.

Whether the connection can be found is another matter. We learn, for instance, of Oom Paul:

> After the war of independence his beard began to grow grey and his hair became thinner. In 1883, when he shaved his upper lip, he had more grey hairs than black. As a boy he parted his hair on the left side. Twenty years later he parted it on the right. This would appear to be of some psychological significance, especially as twenty years later, on his second visit to Europe, he again parted it on the left. When he was older, no parting at all was visible. . . . .

Still Kruger comes off best in this jungle warfare with all that Mr. Cloete cannot bear to leave out. A few pages here and there, a sprinkling of anecdote, and you have the grand old man plain enough—very much the man you were looking for, shrewd and primitive, God-fearing and pig-headed. Poor Lobengula, as in life, draws the shortest straw. He cannot fill his proper space in this trio; he is not sufficiently understood, there is too little to say about him. The problem with Cecil Rhodes is of a different kind. Rhodes was a charmer—and not merely of the weak-minded. He carried people away against their resolutions, against their prejudices; white or black, they could not resist. The testimony on this point is almost deafening; even those who knew those who knew him become involved, and carry it on. Yet, in those outside the charmed circle, stories about him commonly produce no reaction but a slight creeping of the flesh. The trend of history, of course, is partly responsible. Rhodes is still too near us; his blatant "All this to be painted red," and the naive imperialism of his first will are more than unsympathetic, they are embarrassing—as though someone in the room had just committed a frightful *gaffe*. Nor, in our eyes, does the big business improve the flag-waving. Yet there must be something vital as an offset, if we could only get at it. But no: the clumsiness of his mind (to quote a former biographer); the clumsy utterance; the distressing Peter Pan quality—those are full in view, while the man himself, who was irresistible, remains hearsay.

Mr. Cloete, as a novelist, might have re-created this charm; instead he has buried its owner in superlatives and interpretation. Even the rugged surface—rather like a Dutch farmer's,—even the arrested schoolboy, fail to emerge. What we get is the Colossus—the new type—the Spengler man—the prophet of Hitlerism. "Such men cannot be examined as other men. . . . Napoleon, Bismarck, Julius Caesar are relatively simple, but the great Fascist is not. He is great because he is big as a mountain is big. A mountain is neither good nor bad: it exists." And so on, hardly new, and not really very illuminating. The truth is, Mr. Cloete can be generous to Rhodes, at moments absurdly generous, but never just—for he is a Krugerite. His chief preoccupation is to gloss over the seamy side of that regime, and its attempt to sit on the fence between God and Mammon. Dropping the beyond-good-and-evil attitude, he can make much of Rhodes's love for his friends, and dwell on the benevolence of his final aim: but not on the real breadth of his policy, on his good will towards the Dutch, or on the element of conflict "between right and right" which did exist in South Africa.

In short, the whole book is less chronicle than rhapsody—excited, lavish, repetitive. Now the author packs so much event into a few lines that one can scarcely unravel it; then again he finds himself at leisure for a discourse on flags, or on the gold of Ophir—or he tells us for the fifth or sixth time that Rhodes had no use for women, and disliked eating alone. His work is as devoid of pattern as a plum pudding; its redeeming virtue is fruitiness.

K. John

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THE HUMAN FACE DIVINE

The Human Face. By JOHN BROPHY. *George G. Harrap.* 15s.

"Flocks and herds and human face divine." These were amongst the memories that afflicted the imagination of Milton in his blindness. Close the eyes, suppose yourself blind, do you indeed put the human face high amongst lost appearances? Would not remembrance of the placid faces of cows and sheep, faces of most cats, many dogs and nearly all birds, better soothe the bitterness of regret? For the human face *divine* is an ideal, an abstraction. In darkness we cannot command a procession of selected beauties. We have to submit to what daily contact has thrust upon us in multitudinous streets, in packed public vehicles, or on machine-infested roads: faces, for the most part, anxious, convulsed, nerve-racked. Divine or diabolical? After Milton, one recalls De Quincey whose nightmares were haunted by "the tyranny of the human face." He saw waves, seas, of confused features besetting him. One can suffer that sensation without the assistance of opium. And, in his own reveries, a strange assortment of remembered faces will float past the inward eye of Mr. John Brophy. He will see an Egyptian Prime Minister, a young girl in a bog in County Mayo, Allenby, walking unattended in the streets of Cairo, "like a private gentleman of the old school," "T. E. Shaw" with big head and "long flat impressive face," Hugh Walpole "with the complexion of a baby."

These may be agreeable reminiscences. What of the others, the faces that stare, grin and scowl at us wherever we go? What is the matter with these millions? Are they disfigured by the strain of modern life? Are we all growing uglier?

So thought the weary D. H. Lawrence in the days when his soul was seeking her oblivion. "Faces are now only human grimaces," he wrote:—

> Hardly ever, now, has a human face
> the baffling light or the strange still gleam of the gods
> within it, upon it.

To the sensitive physiognomist this must seem horribly true.

Mr. Brophy would probably deny it. With industry and courage—for the task is perilous, prompting night terrors—he has attempted a survey or map of faces, mingling speculations psychological, ethnological, phrenological, with portraits of persons sharply defined; as with autobiographical references, a self-portrait, and even a history of his own moustache. The result is a miscellany of facial facts, combined with fancies; hardly scientific, but very suggestive: the first treatise, Mr. Brophy claims, after fifteen years' preparation for it, to summarise the history of the human face.

But surely there is the celebrated Lavater whose gnomic utterances so deeply interested William Blake, making him, in his own word, "uneasy"? The Swiss mystic is dismissed as a crank. Lombroso? Mr. Brophy quotes him. But Lombroso is incomplete. He specialised in criminals. Mr. Brophy has not found any "established authority" for his enquiries. Established—possibly not. But amongst the oddities of our older literature there are surely treatises or allusions that might have helped him. I will mention only the extraordinary essay of an odd creature, John Bulwer, who in 1653 published a fat quarto with a title I shall hardly be able to get into a line of print—his *Anthropometamorphosis, Man Transformed or the Artificial Changeling*. The book is adorned—or disfigured—by crude cuts illustrating the "deliberate deformation, the cruel gallantry, the foolish bravery, the filthy fineness and loathesome loveliness of most nations." Bulwer is concerned mainly with distortions, but so, on occasion, is Mr. Brophy; or with decorations, and artificial aids to the "divine." This I consider unfair. The frame of the face and the paint upon it are not the face. Fashions should not count. A nose with a ring in it remains, to the anatomist, a nose. We must remove the ring, and keep to the bare structure and the predominant expression, of the face. Mr. Brophy begins to be irrelevant when he discusses masks, other than death-masks, which have a great significance.

Mr. Brophy speaks about dead faces, in the most impressive passage of his book. He denounces Death as "a thief, a taker-away of what is most valued. It evicts from the face the spirit which made it individual, and leaves only a perishable cold monument." Is this true? The dead faces I have seen bore upon them the mark of an immense lassitude, or of a faint perplexity, or of a patience released from "care's claws." The shadow of the spirit rested upon them for a little longer. But on this point Mr. Brophy speaks with a greater authority than most of us, for he has seen the faces of men killed in battle, violently separated, discoloured faces of soldiers several days dead . . .

He is a brave man. He can recall these sights because he is, at heart, an optimist. For example, he can still believe that the Western civilisation in which he lives "with all its defects and suicidal manias" is the finest that "man has anywhere or at any time achieved." Are we not busily preparing to destroy it? Such doubts do not seem to worry Mr. Brophy. He is in love with life; he looks forward with hope; thus he has easily preserved a wholesome sanity in his long examination of human faces, through all ages and races.

Some of his readers, less courageous than he, may close this book with a certain sense of fear, mingled with relief. They will be glad to escape from the obsession of human noses, eyes, mouths and cheekbones. They will turn, in this Springtime, to the contemplation of flocks and herds.

RICHARD JENNINGS

AMERICAN AND ENGLISH STORY

The Book of Modern American Short Stories. Edited by NICHOLAS MOORE. *Editions Poetry, London.* 8s. 6d.

Prater Violet. By CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD. *Methuen.* 5s.

Why is it that publishers are always so suspicious' or needlessly encouraging, of the short story? On the cover of Mr. Nicholas Moore's anthology we read: "The short story is a comparatively new art-form, but clearly it has come to stay." Well, it has stayed so many centuries that perhaps another year or two . . .

It's called *The Book of Modern American Short Stories*, and begins with Sherwood Anderson, whom Mr. Moore regards as one of the two major influences in this field. (Faulkner is the other.) This influence is certainly borne out by the selection that follows. Anderson's "I'm a Fool" introduces the slangy first-person anecdote of a day at the races seen from the grandstand by a man who used to tour the fairs with a couple of race-horses. He slurs vividly and ecstatically over this roving life; then, in the grandstand, makes a fool of himself by reeling out grandiloquent lies to a girl. A slight enough piece, the charm of which lies in its personal emphasis, its mingling of adventure and demotic speech. It is, in fact, the return of the picaresque or tough hero in modern narrative, and as such typical of quite half the pieces selected by Mr. Moore. A doctor slumming it and quietly priding himself, and being tricked by his most interesting patient; two Hemingway hairy-chests boozing their way

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Intimacy of feeling, imaginative purpose, and the precise word are qualities lacking in all but a few of Mr. Moore's authors. When they excel, it's in the manner of the roving camera or of the sports reporter talking fast. Personality rather than style, accent rather than the work of art, inveigle the reader; and I must say that, after a little of this refreshment, I relish the more enduring methods of Mr. Isherwood's *Prater Violet*. This is a slighter comedy in the vein of *Mr. Norris Changes Trains*. The war doesn't seem either to have impaired or advanced a weasel-like talent; after half a dozen years of meditation—when the exile found a safe if not altogether snug retreat in the Temple of Heard—he pops up again, viciously bright as ever, with an episode of film-making in the Thirties. His victim is a grandiose golliwog from Middle Europe, who comes to make a Viennese picture in London. The telephone rings one morning. "Who's there?" "International Bulldog." "*Who?*" Film company, it's explained; so Mr. Isherwood is drawn, driven, cajoled into doing a script and sharing for six months the tempestuous life of the great Friedrich Bergmann. The behind-the-scenes comedy of picture-making is cross-lit by the author's sly egotism and events in Europe (the anti-Socialist *coup* in Vienna). Bergmann is a large fruity creation for whom Mr. Isherwood has an obvious affection: there *is*, in fact, this faint shift of attitude with the years, that Mr. Isherwood loves his Gothic monster a little more heartily with a corresponding increase of self-mockery. Bergmann's sufferings, Mr. Isherwood's own dread of death and impending war, touch the reader with a sharp pang or two; the only flaw in a brilliant tale is the grotesque happy solution. A subtle, inquisitive talent, uneasy but exceedingly aware of itself.

G. W. STONIER

Left Turn, Canada. By M. J. COLDWELL. *Gollancz.* *7s. 6d.*

With some justice, Canada used to be called the Tory Dominion; it may not be many years now before the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation commands a majority at Ottawa. Born only fourteen years ago, the C.C.F. has grown to national stature under Mr. Coldwell's leadership. It now controls the Saskatchewan Legislature and has twenty-eight Members of Parliament, besides groups of varying strength in the other provincial assemblies. Although strongly Socialist in outlook, the C.C.F. draws as much support from farmers as from industrial workers. Mr. Coldwell's excellent book is partly an account of the origins of his party, partly a discussion of Canadian politics, and partly an exposition of C.C.F. policy. He suggests that since there is little real difference between the Liberal and Progressive Conservative Parties, the rise of the C.C.F. may produce at least a *de facto* coalition between the two old parties in order to resist the C.C.F. challenge—as has already happened in British Columbia. Some of the difficulties that hamper the consolidation of a third party in Canada would then be eliminated. Mr. Coldwell gives some illuminating facts about monopolies in Canada. In fact, the main thesis of his book is that Canada's magnificent war effort was accomplished in spite of private enterprise and that Canada will be unable to reap the fruits of the war-time expansion of her industry unless some curb is put upon her native capitalism. This is a very useful book for those interested in the Socialist movement in the Dominions. A progressive administration in Ottawa could make a great deal of difference to the history of the next twenty years. The C.C.F., as Mr. Coldwell points out, is the strongest democratic Socialist organisation in the Western Hemisphere. The war has turned Canada to the Left, and this book marks out that Leftward road.

The Visual Arts: A Report by the Arts Enquiry. P.E.P. *Oxford University Press.* 10s. 6d.

However much we may regret its disappearance, the epoch of the rich amateur who collected old and contemporary masters, and on his death bequeathed them to the nation, is almost over. Social and economic conditions have made *laissez-faire* patronage increasingly difficult, and if the art of painting is to survive at all, much more needs to be done by the State to help promising young painters and generally to raise the standard of education in art. This report is the result of a survey conducted by a group of experts under the chairmanship of Dr. Julian Huxley, in which are embodied various proposals for raising the status of the visual arts in the life of the community. Three other reports will be published later dealing with the factual film, music and the theatre. The writers recommend more State patronage of artists, improvement of design in industry, more travelling exhibitions of pictures and the placing of lithographs on the open market at a reasonable price. While the report was being prepared for publication, various authoritative bodies were in fact established with functions similar to those recommended in the report, as, for instance, the new Council of Industrial Design and the reconstituted Arts Council of Great Britain (née C.E.M.A.), which is making works of art available to a far wider public than ever before. A section of the report deals with the running of public art galleries and offers suggestions for their improvement. The facts given about existing conditions in public and private collections cannot always be relied on. For example, almost no statement in the pages dealing with the Royal Collection is absolutely true. However, the purpose of this survey, which is to assure a rightful place for the Arts in post-war planning, is timely and courageous.

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GRAMOPHONE NOTES

Berlioz: *Harold in Italy.* William Primrose with Boston Symphony Orch., cond. Koussevitzky (H.M.V. DB6261–5).

Butterworth: *The Banks of Green Willow.* Philharmonia Orch., cond. Maurice Miles (H.M.V. C3491).

Strauss (Johann): *Leichtes Blut* and *Pizzicato Polka.* Boston Promenade Orch., cond. Fiedler (H.M.V. B9473).

Haydn: *Sonata in D major.* Solomon (H.M.V. C3494).

Chopin: *Polonaise in A* and *Fantaisie-Impromptu.* Iris Loveridge (Col. DX1239).

Handel: "O Sleep" (*Semele*) and "Come, Beloved" (*Atalanta*). Ada Alsop with Boyd Neel String Orch. (Decca K1164).

Delibes: *Bell Song* (*Lakmé*). Lily Pons, with orch. (Col. LX940).

Wagner: *Tannhäuser: Wolfram's Entry,* and "O Star of Eve," Herbert Janssen, with Orch. of the Colon Opera, Buenos Aires, and the Metropolitan Opera Orch. (Col. DX948).

Donizetti: *L'Elisir d'Amore:* "Down her Pale Cheek," and

Gounod: *Romeo and Juliet:* "'Tis Love!" Heddle Nash, with Philharmonia Orch., cond. Süsskind (H.M.V. C3492).

Moore: "Oft in the Stilly Night," and

MacMurrough: "Macushla." Christopher Lynch, acc. Gerald Moore (H.M.V. DA1858).

Lalo: *Le Roi d'Ys: Aubade,* and

Tosti: "Pour un Baiser." Richard Tauber, with orch. (Parl. RO20546).

Harold in Italy has all the virtues, and comparatively few of the faults, of Berlioz's other big orchestral compositions. Originally conceived as a concerto for Paganini, it quickly grew into something much more personal to Berlioz himself—a daydream in the manner of the *Symphonie Fantastique*, but controlled by a less exactingly literary programme. As it turned out, the work is not a concerto at all, but a sinfonia concertante—which no doubt explains why Paganini showed no interest in it, once it was written. The first movement is among Berlioz's most successful compositions—a grave and euphonious polyphonic introduction followed—after the solo viola has stated Harold's theme, with some delicately scored embroideries—by a six-eight allegro in his most vivid style. The Pilgrim's March is rescued from monotony by the (*pace* Sir Henry Hadow) imaginative way in which each line of the tune is made to turn in a different direction. Here the conductor has ignored Berlioz's intended picture, for the pilgrims are supposed to approach from a distance and then recede: by starting the march (marked *ppp* in the score) *mf* Koussevitzky has spoilt the effect. In the final Orgy of Brigands Berlioz begins by quoting from the first three movements, after the model of the Ninth Symphonie, but with comic effect, for Harold's nostalgic reverie is less answered than brutally interrupted by the brigands ("Shut up, you beastly highbrow!") until, intimidated, he gives way entirely to the assaults of the big drum and cymbals. This finale is the weakest of the four movements, partly because Berlioz has insisted on giving full symphonic treatment to material which will not bear the strain of so much repetition. But the whole work is full, not only of romantic beauty, but of musical ingeniosities that repay careful study. This is in fact a set to buy and keep, for although the recording is perhaps not quite as fine as that of *Till Eulenspiegel*, it is never offensive to the ear, and the performance is generally masterly. The solo of William Primrose has a noble legato sonority which one very rarely hears from a viola.

The Banks of Green Willow, though perhaps of slighter interest than Butterworth's *Shropshire Lad* rhapsody, is nevertheless a fresh-complexioned piece of music. Commendably brief, it discusses a good tune without affectation and in a thoroughly musicianly manner. Performance and recording excellent.

The Strauss Polkas sound less disagreeable than most of this orchestra's recordings, but that is not saying very much. There is plenty of bass and the rhythm is well braced; but a less resonant studio would, I should think, have improved the effect of the *al fresco* orchestration of these gay little pieces.

I have only one fault to find with the recording of the Haydn piano sonata: for some reason, evidently quite unconnected with the playing, the intonation of the piano appears to waver in the slow movement (but not elsewhere), giving a slightly guitar-like effect. Otherwise the issue is a delight. The sonata is not important music, but Solomon's beautifully correct style, and his very sparing use of the sustaining pedal, bring out its extreme elegance. The perfect control for which this pianist is so remarkable is especially to be noticed in his playing of the tiny phrase which concludes the first movement. On the other hand, I find it difficult to say anything in praise of Miss Iris Loveridge's Chopin. Perhaps the *Polonaise in A* must always sound more or less dull and stodgy in the hands of an English pianist, but I can see no excuse for imparting so much false brilliance to the *Fantaisie-Impromptu*. Miss Loveridge does not "sing" the D flat tune at all—she prints it, as if the notes were letters on a typewriter.

Miss Ada Alsop's singing of two of Handel's most melting arias is an outstandingly beautiful thing, and the recording is worthy of it. Miss Alsop's tone is silken, steady and in every way perfectly suited to this kind of song. There are no attempts at personal display, and the nocturnal hush expressed in both the arias is very strikingly conveyed. The opening phrase, and the divisions, in "O Sleep" could be more carefully sung; but this is one of the best vocal records of recent years.

Mme Lily Pons is, of course, a very efficient coloratura soprano, but to say that her style lacks refinement is to put it mildly. *Lakmé* may not be a very distinguished opera, but it is not mere rubbish, and the orientalism of the Bell Song is far from being as crude as it is often represented. Galli-Curci sang (and recorded) it to perfection, musically and without fuss. Mme Pons, on the contrary, attacks it with the beady-eyed vehemence of an angry peahen. The "bell" passage, in particular, gains nothing by being rushed at like this. I must, however, add that, unlike most issues, this one takes in the whole of the song; it is also extremely well recorded.

It is good to hear Herbert Janssen once again, and in such good voice. Gratified though we may be for his singing in these old favourites, it would be nicer still to hear him, with Helen Traubel, in the complete recording of *Die Walküre*, Act 3, which was made in America during the war. Like the Bell Song, this disc is very well recorded, and the orchestral accompaniment remarkably fine. I have not come across so silent a surface for a long time.

Heddle Nash's style is better suited to the Gounod aria (not a very interesting one) than to Donizetti, which needs a more Mediterranean warmth of colour. The orchestral part comes through with a clarity and discretion that add much to the value of the disc. Although it is obvious that Christopher Lynch is something more than a sub-McCormack, these songs are very badly recorded. The end of "Macushla," with its steady and effortless ascent to a high and soft B flat, convinces one of the quality of Mr. Lynch's voice; otherwise the microphone has contrived to make it sound uniformly coarse and edgy.

The latest version of the Aubade from *Le Roi d'Ys*, described as by Lalo, is absolutely inexcusable. I say "described as" since the label gives no indication that this famously charming song has been tampered with—unless "as sung in the film *The Lisbon Story*" is to be taken as implying this. The instrumental accompaniment to the solo has been messed about in the most hideous way, and—worse still—the chorus, instead of simply singing the tune, is given a Metro-Goldwyn descant in the upper register. Richard Tauber's delivery of the solo is fulsome. Luckily, Tosti is too coarse-grained to come to much harm.

Edward Sackville West

Company Meetings

THE DAILY NEWS LIMITED

CENTENARY YEAR

Mr. L. J. Cadbury, the chairman, presiding at the annual general meeting of The Daily News Limited, held on May 22 at 12, Bouverie Street, London, E.C., said: The year under review is the 100th of our existence as a newspaper. On January 21, 1946, we celebrated our centenary. On that day in 1846 the first issue of *The Daily News* was produced with Charles Dickens as its editor. It came out on the eve of a Parliamentary session that was to debate the Corn Laws and ultimately to repeal them. Dickens did not remain editor for long, but he collected around him a brilliant staff and established for the new paper a policy of progress and reform. Our centenary was celebrated last January by a dinner at which we were honoured by the presence of some five hundred guests representing the Press, the Services, Politics, Art and Industry.

During the course of its existence *The Daily News* has changed its name. By its amalgamation with the *Daily Chronicle* in 1930 it became the *News Chronicle.* The title *The Daily News,* however, still continues to exist as the name of this company. The Daily News Ltd. controls two subsidiaries—News Chronicle Ltd. and the Star Newspaper Co. Ltd., which, in turn, own the copyrights of their respective papers. The parent company also acts as their printers and publishers as well as performing other common services. We are proud that the original name is preserved by the parent company, for it sums up a century of newspaper enterprise and of fidelity to a progressive point of view in politics and affairs.

A hundred years ago *The Daily News,* then priced fivepence, was carrying on an energetic campaign to free newspapers from the taxes on knowledge which were choking the channels of public information. As a result of those efforts, the people were eventually able to enjoy the benefits of a cheap Press. To-day we are cramped by different fetters. The shortage of newsprint hits us at a time when the pace of events is almost breathless; developments of the utmost importance are happening in the foreign field, while from Parliament there pours out a stream of major legislation, most of it affecting every one of us. The advocates of a cheap Press a century ago used this argument: "Give the people an opportunity of knowing what is happening so that they may judge wisely." I think that argument is equally forceful in its application to the shortage of newsprint.

In the years ahead one of our great preoccupations as a people will be to equate the freedom of the individual with planning for the community. It is in this sphere that our newspapers, the *News Chronicle* and *The Star,* which have never been tied to any party, but represent a broad liberal and progressive outlook, have invaluable services to render. We must be vigilant to see that a fair balance is maintained between the claims of the State and the rights of the individual, that in mobilising the resources of the community for the common weal the adventurous and experimental spirit should not be extinguished. The danger of all institutions is their hardening into a rigid orthodoxy. The greater the powers acquired by the State, the more necessary is it to preserve the free play of the critical faculty, to ensure that the unorthodox gets a hearing, and that the weight of authority does not crush out freshness and originality of mind.

The report was adopted.

UNITED MOLASSES

BRIGHTER PROSPECTS

The twentieth annual general meeting of The United Molasses Company Ltd. will be held on June 11 in London.

The following is an extract from the statement by the chairman, Mr. F. K. Kielberg, circulated with the report:

Looking back to 1940-41, when the war engulfed the company's large and widespread interests in Europe and the Far East, I cannot help but feel profoundly thankful at being able to-day to report that the company's financial position is much stronger and its trading prospects considerably brighter than anyone could have reasonably hoped for.

Although the profits of the company have, since 1940, fallen considerably short of the pre-war standard, the results for the war period as a whole must be considered satisfactory. It will be seen that the total net profits available for distribution showed an increase over the previous year of £5,000, and were sufficient to maintain the dividends, to allocate £150,000 (the same) to general reserve, and to increase the carry-forward by £28,000. Trading results for the first four months of the current year have been satisfactory, and prospects for the remainder of the year appear favourable.

The accounts show that the company's financial position was still further strengthened during the year. Current assets at £8,138,127 exceeded current liabilities of £1,246,510 by £6,891,617. Of this amount £6,512,490 was represented by cash and investments in dated British Government securities.

Under the heading of current assets, I should call attention to the heavy decline in stocks of molasses. The value fell from £206,000 to £22,060, a symptom of the acute molasses shortage throughout the world.

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